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Scarlet Street

The Magazine of Mystery and Horror

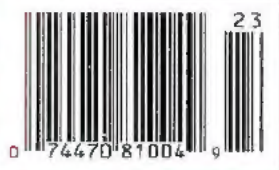
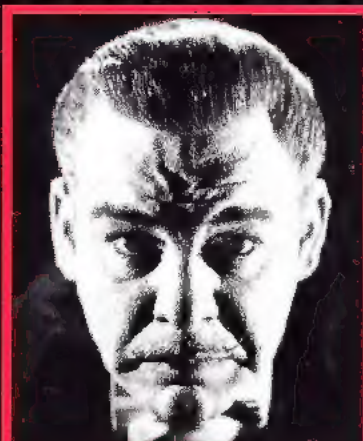
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M10 (The Mask)



M11 (Borne unto Hell)

Scarlet Letters



I loved the "spread" on my work and all the nice comments [*Scarlet Street* #7]. Thanks so much for the copy of the magazine. You're right about Elizabeth Shepherd—you caught her exactly in her interview.

Vincent Price
Los Angeles, CA

Thank you so much for spending the time and effort on my adventures with the circus world [*Scarlet Street* #6]. It was an exciting time in my life, and your article brought back many wonderful memories.

David Nelson
Los Angeles, CA

I wanted to drop a brief note to thank you again for *Scarlet Street*'s terrific interview with David Nelson. It was a great opportunity for your readers to learn more about David as well as see some great photos with the article.

Most of all, we appreciate your help in pulling together all the information, photo captions, etc., needed to make the piece successful.

Your magazine is definitely the best and most informative of its kind. Keep up the good work.

Lance Morgan
Casablanca Productions
Los Angeles, CA

Thank you for such a delicious DINNER WITH YVETTE [*Scarlet Street* #7]. I just loved it. I think Jessie Lilley, Tom Weaver, and the Brunas brothers captured the best of Yvette. This is another marvelous issue. Your standards are beautifully high.

I'm in the process of taping another cassette of great standard songs.

Thanks again. I look forward to the next time we meet.

Yvette Vickers
Beverly Hills, CA

I'd like to take the opportunity to comment on your splendid publication. It's a unique blend of horror and mystery. I've kept up with the innumerable publications available in horror and mystery fandom for the past 20 years. Without a doubt your publication is the best around. In fact, it's the best I've ever seen. It's simply first-rate. Since I've published books and fanzines in various genres (mainly horror and mystery) for the past 10 years, I've learned to appreciate something worthwhile when I see it.

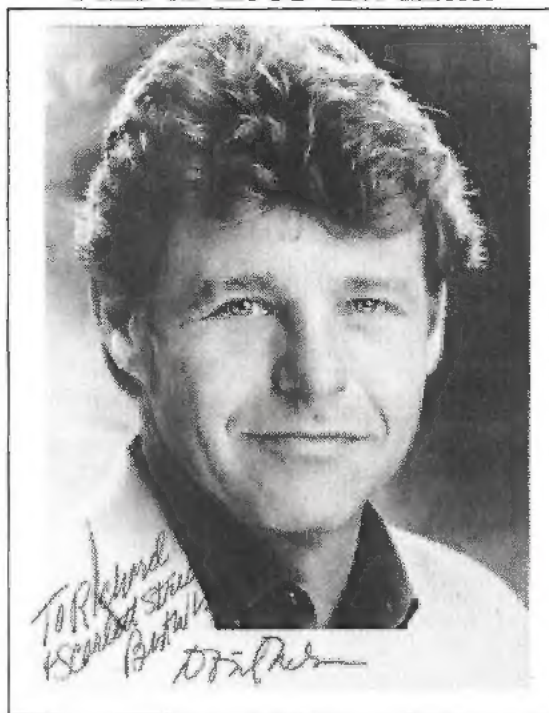
I regard Vincent Price as the all-time King of Horror, so I particularly enjoyed the variety of Vincent Price articles in #7. I also enjoyed the articles in #6 and #7 about the Sherlock Holmes series starring Jeremy Brett. He is without a doubt the best Holmes ever. For many Holmes aficionados he is the only actor to come along and replace everyone's image of Basil Rathbone as Holmes.

I look forward to future issues and hope that *Scarlet Street* will be around for a very long time to come. If should some day become a genuine collector's item.

Sharida Rizzuto
Baker Street Publications
Metairie, LA

What a delightful experience to relive TOMB OF LIGEIA for *Scarlet Street*. Your tribute to the movie is perceptive and very satisfying. I believe Roger Corman's unique and invigorating contribution to film is only now being seriously realized and appreciated. What a pleasure to see

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DAVID NELSON

Vincent Price honored. I can hear his voice in the interview! I enjoyed the whole magazine. It is certainly entertaining to look at, and a good solid "read," too.

I wish *Scarlet Street* a long, mysterious, and horrific future!

Elizabeth Shepherd
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Eagerly picked up the Summer 1992 issue when I saw the Vincent Price photo on the cover.

No mention of my second-favorite V.P. flick (the first being DR. PHIBES)—what about CRY OF THE BANSHEE? Not one word! Weird.

George Liston
Sherman Oaks, CA

I thoroughly enjoyed reading *Scarlet Street* #7. I never knew your magazine existed until I spotted it on the newsstand. I am now enclosing my subscription order.

I'm a great fan of Vincent Price and am wondering if those two great movies he made, LAURA (1944) and DRAGONWYCK (1946), are available on video cassette. If you know, I'd appreciate knowing where I could order them.

Thanks for a great mag.

Terry Spaar
Harrisburg, PA

Unfortunately, neither LAURA nor DRAGONWYCK are currently available on video.

My question is regarding the background music used in the Inspector Morse series; there are constant references to Bach or Wagner, but I'm not that familiar with classical music.

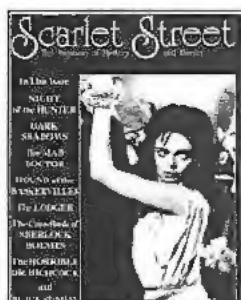
The composer is listed as Barrington Pheloung, but nothing is mentioned in the credits as to the name of the song. Could you please let me know if this is recorded on a CD and what the name of the song is.

Pamela S. Watt
New York, NY

Barrington Pheloung is the composer of the original background music for INSPECTOR MORSE, the theme of which is titled simply "Main

Five steps to Scarlet Street

The Magazine of Mystery and Horror



No. 3 (Reprint): THE MAD DOCTOR, DARK SHADOWS, NIGHT OF THE HUNTER, TARZAN, BLACK SUNDAY, THE LODGER, THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, William Phipps, John Hamp-hill, THE DANCING MEN, THE HORRIBLE DR. HICCOCK



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No. 6: CIRCUS OF HOR-RORS, Noel Neill, David Nel-son, THE MASTER BLACK-MAILER, VAMPIRE CIRCUS, George Baxt, Sidney Hayers, Erika Femberg, BATMAN, FREAKS, GORG, NIGHT-MARE ALLEY, STRANGERS ON A TRAIN, BERSERK!



No. 7: Vincent Price, John Moulder-Brown, Yvette Vick-ers, TOMB OF LIGEIA, THE SUSSEX VAMPIRE, Joan Hickson, BLUEBEARD, BAT-MAN RETURNS, Elizabeth Shepherd, HOUSE OF WAX, THE RAVEN, LAURA, INNO-CENT BLOOD.



No. 8: Peter Cushing, Rosalie Williams, John Landis, BRAM STOKER'S DRAC-ULA, FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN, DAUGHTERS OF DARK-NESS, SLEEPING MUR-DER, THE LOST BOYS, KISS OF THE VAMPIRE.



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Theme." Music from the show, including excerpts from such classical pieces as Mozart's THE MAGIC FLUTE, is available on compact disk from Virgin.

I'd never heard of your magazine before and was very pleasantly surprised. A circus issue—great idea. I had no idea there'd been so many films with circus themes. I was reminded of my Saturday afternoons sneaking off to the 25-cent sci-fi/horror double features at the Oritani in Hackensack. (God, am I getting old, or what?) The layout is great—easy on the eye, with a perfect balance between pictures and text.

Keep up the good work.
F. Paul Wilson
Author of *The Keep*
Brick Town, NJ

I just picked up *Scarlet Street* #7, and you have one excellent magazine!

Being a 1950s sci-fi/horror film fan, I enjoyed reading your articles on Vincent Price and Yvette Vickers. I see that you are covering *THE BLACK SCORPION* (1957) in your next issue, and I can't wait! I hope to see you do some stories on *THE MAZE* (1953), *TARGET EARTH* (1954), *THE SHE-CREATURE* (1956), *NOT OF THIS EARTH* (1957), and *FIEND WITH-OUT A FACE* (1958). Also, I would like to see an all-femme-fatale issue with such stars as Allison Hayes, Marla English,

and other B-movie actresses from the 1950s, 1960s, and up to the present time.

I am assuming that *Scarlet Street* #1 and #2 are sold out, but if you could briefly tell me what the contents of the issues are and, if possible, whom I might contact to purchase them, I would greatly appreciate it.

Keep up the good work! I've been a subscriber to *Filmfax* right from the start, and I have to say that the quality of paper you use is better. Also, *Filmfax* seems to have much more advertising; it almost seems that you have to go through half the magazine to get to the first story.

John Perullo
Saugus, MA
Scarlet Street #1 and #2 are indeed sold out, but we plan to reprint them in the future. Check the CLASSIFIED ADS on page 101 to purchase those issues that are currently out of stock. *THE SHE-CREATURE* was briefly covered in *Scarlet Street* #6. *THE BLACK SCORPION* will rear its ugly tail in our second anniversary issue, due January 1993.

Wow, Issue #6 was fantastic. I am a video and pressbook collector. I make my living in the circus industry. I am currently on the road in Connecticut. My interests are circus, carnival, exploitation, and sexploitation. I have in my collection every circus film in Issue #6 with the exception of *SHE-CREATURE* (1956) and *NIGHT TIDE* (1963). I also have two or

three hundred circus, carnival, magic, and burlesque videos, including Ozzie and Harriet's TV show with young David at the circus. I am really proud of my circus-movie pressbook collection. It is quite extensive.

Scarlet Street is a gem, and Issue #6 was fantasmatic! I enjoyed it more than you will ever know.

Jim Ridenour
Sarasota, FL

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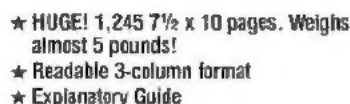
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plot • cast • country of origin • year of release • running time • color or black and white • distributor and producer • assessment and ratings (sometimes surprising) • writer • director • photographer • music credits • critical comments • alternative titles • other notable credits • Academy Awards and nominations

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Frankly Scarlet

Hey, we won! Little did we suspect, when we fled the crimson comforts of Scarlet Street to attend the Fanex 6 convention in Towson, Maryland, that we would be the stunned, red-faced recipients of the 1992 Fanzine Award for Best Semi-Pro Magazine. ("Semi-pro" means that we are a professional magazine delivered in trucks.) We're deeply and sincerely honored to find ourselves in the company of such past winners as *Video Watchdog*, *Psychotronic*, and *Cinemacabre*. On behalf of everyone here on Scarlet Street, I want to thank Gary and Susan Svehla of *Midnight Marquee* magazine and the Horror and Fantasy Film Society of Baltimore for the award; for the fine, fun-filled convention; and for the chance to meet what is fast becoming a legion of *Scarlet Street* fans. My special thanks to everyone listed in this magazine's masthead and thank-

you box; they're the heart and soul of *Scarlet Street*. (Hearts are one of the most popular items at the Scarlet Street Clinic, run by a certain baron of our acquaintance, and souls are always up for grabs at the corner hock shop.) Oh, and before I forget—congrats, too, to Bob Sargent, whose great *Videooze* magazine won a Fanex award as 1992's Best Fanzine.

Introducing last issue's glowering cover-ghoul, Mr. Vincent Price, I waxed nostalgic over the grand old Prospect Theatre on Ninth Street in Brooklyn, where in 1964 Dad took me to see the priceless Price in *THE COMEDY OF TERRORS*. Four years earlier, at that same neighborhood playhouse, Mom and I thrilled to *THE BRIDES OF DRACULA*. (Well, I thrilled; the only movie Mom's ever thrilled to is John Ford's *HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY*.) It was my introduction to Peter Cushing, Hammer horror star and Sherlock Holmes extraordinaire, with whom I had the enormous pleasure of speaking this past year. You'll find the first installment of what I believe to be one of *Scarlet Street*'s most enjoyable interviews on page 34. Hope you have as much fun reading it as I had conducting it.

In our first two years of publishing, we've made a concerted effort to catch as

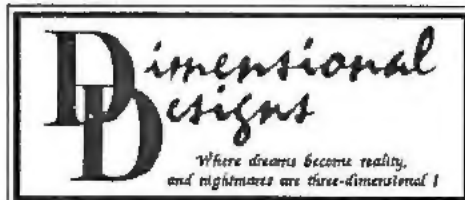
many typographical errors as possible. Still, a few always squeak by, and last issue's was, in the immortal word of Hazel, a doozy. What we meant to print was "Miss Hickson," referring, of course, to Joan Hickson, the definitive Miss Marple to a generation of Agatha Christie fans. What wound up on the page was "Mill Hickson," a person whose identity is a mystery even Miss Marple can't crack. Our sincere apologies to Scot D. Rycrson, whose original manuscript was happily free of so inventive an error, and particularly, to Joan Hickson, who deserves better at our Scarlet hands.

This issue, *Scarlet Street* stretches all the way to the craggy Borgo Pass in the Carpathian mountains for a look at Dracula, his son, his daughter, and a whole slew of vampires, both past and present. Next issue marks our monstrous mag's second anniversary. Join interviewees Joan Bennett, Peter Cushing, Richard Denning, Thomas Beck, Veronica Carlson, and Jeremy Brett, plus the usual gang of suspects for our slam-bang celebration.

Richard Valley



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BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS (1955) Paul Christian, Kenneth Tobey, Paula Raymond, Ecol Kellaway, Lee Van Cleef. Classic 50s sci-fi that spawned countless imitations. (Tono pays daily homage to this film). A prehistoric monster, bred from the icy crypt by an atomic blast, makes its way to the New York metropolitan area where it rips through the city, eventually ending up entwined in the twisting tracks of the giant, Coney Island rollercoaster. An unforgettable climax with sensational Ray Harryhausen special effects. One of the most beloved films of its kind. From 35mm. \$159

BLACK SABBATH (1963) Boris Karloff, Mark Damon, Michele Mercier, Jacqueline Pierreux. A Mario Bava masterpiece. Karloff hosts and stars in this superb trilogy of horror stories, all of which are unforgettable. "The Drop of Blood" concerns a nurse who steals a ring off a dead spiritualist, only to have the corpse seek revenge. "The Telephone" features a prostitute who's terrorized by phone calls from a dead client. The final and best is, "The Wordless" featuring Karloff as a vampire who preys upon the blood of his loved ones. Better than BLACK SUNDAY in the minds of many critics and fans alike. AIP scored big with this one. From 16mm. \$176



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SECRET OF THE TELEGRAM (1962) Koji Tsuruta, Tadao Nakamura, Akihiko Hirata. One of the rarest of all Japanese sci-fi films. Men are being mysteriously murdered by a vengeful madman known as "the Telegram", who uses a matter transmitting device to find his intended victims no matter where they are. Released in the U.S. in B&W only. From 16mm. \$161

FABIOLA (1951) Michele Morgan, Henri Vidal, Michel Simon, Gino Cervi. Long before Steve Reeves and the muscular epics of the late 50s there was FABIOLA. The granddaddy of all Italian spectacle films. Considered by many to be the best of its kind. Court intrigue abounds as merciless Roman aristocrats plot the genocide of Christians before the arrival of Constantine. Rated 4 stars by Leonard Maltin. From 16mm. \$543

THE BEATNIKS (1960) Tony Travis, Peter Brock, Karen Kadler, Joyce Terry. One of the rarest and most sought after J.D. films. The good looking leader of a gang of beatnik thieves is heard singing along with a jukebox by a roving talent scout who offers him a chance at the big time. His beatnik buddy isn't too crazy about him breaking from the gang and sets out to cause trouble. From 35mm. \$524



GUN GIRLS (1956) Timothy Farrell, Jean Ferguson, Jacquelyn Park, Jean Ann Lewis. A gang of gun toting babes are on the prowl, holding up everything and everybody in sight. Farrell forces their stolen goods and gets his gun moll girlfriend pregnant. An exploitation masterpiece that reeks of that magical, Ed Woodian hilarity. From 35mm. X066

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE (1913) King Baggot, Jane Gail, Matt Snyder, Howard Crumpton. The first Universal horror film! The classic Stevenson story about a scientist who attempts to separate the good and evil found in all men. Baggot, who was a big star in the early days of Universal, essays the title role in this early, silent horror classic. \$733



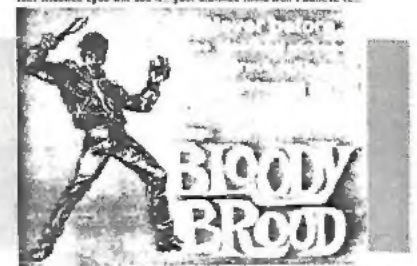
THE MAD EXECUTIONERS (1963) Wolfgang Preiss, Gino Howard, Maria Perschy. From the pen of Edgar Wallace. A mad scientist decapitates his victims and tries to keep their heads alive. Meanwhile, a group of strange vigilantes are capturing and murdering 'criminals' without benefit of public trial. Is there a connection? Scotland Yard investigates. Released here by Paramount. Letterboxed in scope. From 16mm. \$178



DAY THE EARTH FROZE (1959) Nina Anderson, Jon Powers, Peter Sorenson. A superb Finnish/Soviet fantasy epic about an evil witch who steals the sun and causes just about everything on the Earth to freeze. Also featured are magic harps, fields of snakes, a wizard, and a magic mill. Released here by A.I.P. From 16mm. \$019

THE BLOODY BROOD (1959) Peter Falk, Jack Betts, Barbara Lord. An intense and sometimes brutal film about a drug dealing gang of beatniks who get their kicks by perverse and violent means. (They feed a messenger boy a hamburger laced with ground glass). Extremely well done for such a low budget vehicle. Falk is excellent. From 35mm. \$823

Your shocked eyes will see it... your stunned mind won't believe it...

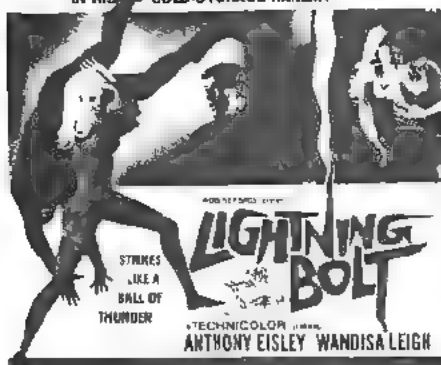


STARRING PETER FALK JACK BETTS BARBARA LORD
Produced and Directed by Julian Hoffman. Released by Solart Pictures Corp.



COMMON LAW WIFE (1933) Arma MacAddams, Max Anderson, George Edgely, Lucy Kelly. A brickhouse sex kitten makes the move on everyone from young studs to old men. (She has a good time doing it, too). An amazing explanation cheese that ranges from unintentional hilarity to dramatic intensity rarely found in films of this nature. Climax is gritty and shocking. A great party film. Rated "R" From 35mm. X053

SUBMIT TO THE MASTER...OR BE FROZEN FOREVER IN HIS COLD-STORAGE HAREM!



LIGHTNING BOLT (1995) Anthony Easley, Diana Loya, Josie Parker. Directed by Antonio Margheri. A secret agent goes after a madman who plots world domination from his incredible underwater city. He and his cohorts defied moon rockets launched from Cape Kennedy by blasting them out of the sky with laser beams. Much in the spirit of James Bond with a nice blend of sci-fi and espionage. From 16mm. SP09

THE NARCOTIC STORY (1956) Narrated by Art Gilmore. A hard expose about the evils of heroin addiction. Originally intended for police seminars only, then released to the general public with a sensational ad campaign. The depiction of burned out heroin addicts is hilarious. This stuff was supposed to scare us when we were kids. From 35mm. X061



This police film caused a furor when it was released to the general public in 1958.

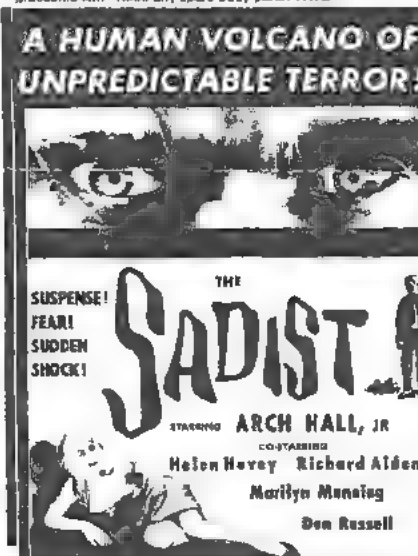


THE PRIME TIME (1960) Jo Ann LeCompte, Frank Roche, Karen Black, Ray Gronwald. Directed by H.G. Lewis. Herself's most sought after non-gore film. A fairly raucy story about a young girl who gets involved with teenage vigilantes, a slimy detective, and a beserk artist who forces her to pose nude. Gritty to say the least. Rated "R" From 35mm. X062

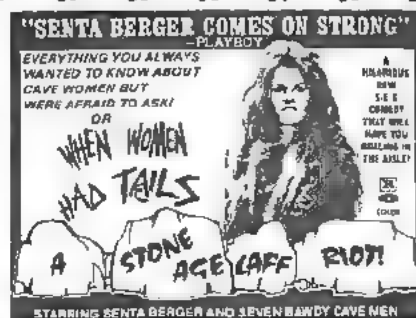
BULLDOG DRUMMOND AT BAY (1937) John Lodge, Victor Jory, Dorothy Mackall, Hugh Miller. In this British entry to the series, we find Drummond up against foreign agents trying to steal plans for a top-secret aircraft. Lodge is quite good in the title role. Released here by Republic. From 16mm. M210



MILL OF THE STONE WOMEN (1960) Wolfgang Preis, Pierre Brice, Dany Carrel, Seila Gabel. An exhibit of strange female statues in an old windmill turns out to be a bizarre tool for a mad scientist who's murdering young girls and using their blood to keep his daughter alive. The statues, needless to say, aren't really what they appear to be. A nightmarish and gruesome film. Need any spare body parts? M172



THE SADIST (1963) Arch Hall, Jr., Helen Hovey, Richard Alden. The greatest low-budget psycho-horror movie ever made, period, bar none. Three people driving into L.A. for a Dodgers game have car trouble and pull into an old weeding yard where they're held at bay by a bloodthirsty psycho and his crazy girlfriend. They put their captives through pure hell in this thriller that was easily 10 years ahead of its time. Brutal and shocking. It's almost inconceivable that the same people that made hilarious schlock like Eegah and Wild Guitar could have made such an intense riveting minor masterpiece. You'll break a cold sweat watching this one. Our highest recommendation. From 35mm. M175

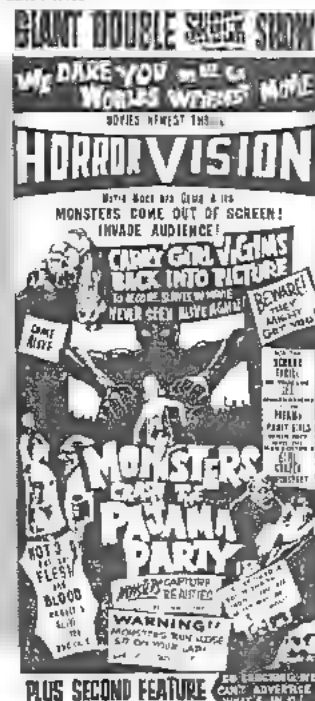


WHEN WOMEN HAD TAILS (1970) Senta Berger, Frank Wolf. A real cavewoman fantasy featuring a sometimes loopy Ms. Berger complete with Lady Godiva hair and tail. Kind of a recondite version of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Hokey, but fun, with lots of prehistoric slapstick. Senta's a knockout. From 35mm. S165



DAUGHTER OF HORROR (1956) Adrienne Barlett, Bruno VeSola, Angelo Rossitto. Narrated by Ed McMahon. A strange, fascinating film about a wandering girl who falls into a strange series of events that culminates with her saving off the hand of the man she has murdered. The film has virtually no dialogue and is done in a wandering, dream-like style. A favorite of many obscurists. From 16mm. M171

MONSTERS CRASH THE PAJAMMA PARTY (1965) Don Brandon. Probably the rarest horror movie from the 1960s. Shown theatrically in combination with a live act. A group of teenagers invade a "haunted house" to find a mad scientist conducting weird experiments. At a certain point in the film, the scientist sends his henchmen out to seek new victims. They run towards the camera as though they're running into the audience. The screen goes dark. At this point real live people were supposed to run up and down the aisle looking for victims. They grab a girl from the audience, carry her screaming through the exit curtains, and then magically reappear with their new victim on the screen. A must see for all collectors of horror obscurities. From 35mm. M180



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SCIENCE FICTION

BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS (1953) Paul Christian, Keaton Tacey, Paul Raymond. Classic 50s sci-fi. A prehistoric monster, freed from the ice by an atomic blast, rips through New York City and ends up entwined in the giant Coney Island rollercoaster. Sensational Harryhausen special effects. From 35mm. \$159

GIRL IN HIS POCKET (1957) Jean Marais, Genevieve Page, Jean Claude Braly. An eccentric scientist discovers a method for shrinking people. He uses his girlfriend as a guinea pig with somewhat comical results. From 16mm. \$160

SECRET OF THE TELEGRAM (1962) Koji Tsurumi, Tadeo Nakamura. Men are being mysteriously murdered by a vengeful madman known as "The Telegram", who uses a matter transmitting device to find his intended victims no matter where they hide. From 16mm. \$161

CREATED LOVE OF A PREHISTORIC MAMMOTH FOR A RAVENING TEENAGE GEM!



EGAN (1962) Arch Hall, Jr., Richard Kiel, Marilyn Manning, Arch Hall, Sr. Hilarious schlock about three people who discover an actual cave man living out in the desert. Where would American culture be without Fairway International Pictures? Incredible. From 35mm. \$162

LIGHTNING BOLT (1965) Anthony Eisley, Diane Lorys. A secret agent goes after a madman who directs moon rockets launched from Cape Kennedy by blasting them out of the sky with a giant laser gun. A nice blend of sci-fi and espionage. From 16mm. \$160

TERROR BENEATH THE SEA (1960) Shindo Shimizu, Mike Dancow. A mad scientist is turning people into water-breathing robot monsters! He plans world domination from his incredible underwater city. Terrific transformation scenes. From 16mm. \$163

DESTROY ALL PLANETS (1968) Peter Williams, Keijiro Hongo, Tord Pakduske. Another epic Gamera film. This time the fire-breathing, flying, prehistoric turtle battles invading aliens whose spaceship can turn into a giant flying squid. From 16mm. \$164

WHEN WOMEN HAD TAILS (1970) Senta Berger, Frank Wolff. A cinematic fantasy following a sometimes lovelass, sometimes kind of a misanthropic version of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Lots of prehistoric slapstick. Senta's a knockout. From 35mm. \$165

HORROR

DAUGHTER OF HORROR (1955) Adrienne Barrett, Bruno VeSota. A fascinating film about a wandering girl who falls into an eerie series of events that culminates with her saving the hand of the man she has murdered. The film no dialogue and is done in a dream-like style. From 16mm. \$171

MILL OF THE STONE WOMEN (1960) Wolfgang Petois, Pierre Brice, Darryl Currell. An exhibit of strange female statues in an old windmill turns out to be a bizarre trap for a mad scientist who's murdering young girls and using their blood to keep his daughter alive. From 16mm. \$172

THE NAKED WITCH (1963) Jibby Hall, Robert Short. Reference books are wrong. Directed by Larry Buchanan, not Andy Milligan. Shot in Texas, not New York. An ancient witch comes back to life when a student removes a stake from her heart. She seeks out bloody revenge against the local village. Some hilarious shots of her reviving around naked while someone holds their finger over the camera lens to block out her vital organs. Much of the film is scored with organ music similar to CARNIVAL OF SOULS, the real with themes from THE FATHERS FROM OUTERSPACE. From 35mm. \$173

BLUEBEARD (1963) Michele Morgan, Charles Denner, Hildegard Neil. The macabre, twisted tale of the famous French marquis who did away with his many wives. This well done French production has an almost black comedic touch to it. Dubbed in English. From 16mm. \$174



THE SADIST (1963) Arch Hall, Jr., Helen Hovey, Richard Alden. Three people driving into L.A. have car trouble and pull into an old wrecking yard where they're held at bay by a bloodthirsty psycho and his crazy girlfriend. Our highest recommendation. From 35mm. \$175

BLACK SABBATH (1963) Boris Karloff, Mark Damon, Michelle Mercier. A Mario Bava masterpiece! Karloff hosts and stars in this superb trilogy of horror stories: "The Drop of Water", "The Telephone", and "The Wurdak", featuring Karloff as a vampire. From 16mm. \$176

THE STRANGLER (1963) Victor Buono, Ellen Corby, David McLean. There's a mad killer on the loose in the form of an overweight lab technician. His victims are the nurses who attend his overpossessive mother. From 16mm. \$177

THE MAD EXECUTIONERS (1963) Wolfgang Petois, Chris Howland, Marie Perle. A mad scientist decapitates his victims and tries to keep their heads alive. Scotland Yard investigates. From 16mm. \$178

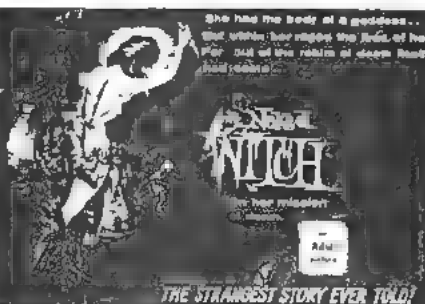
SIN YOU SINNERS (1964) A has-been exotic dancer gets her hands on an ancient smelter that enables her to project youthfulness. Through it she manipulates the lives of the people around her. An abrupt twist ending. From 35mm. \$179

MONSTER CRASH THE PAJAMMA PARTY (1965) Don Brandon. Shown theatrically in combination with a live act. Teenagers in a "haunted house" find a mad scientist conducting weird experiments. At one point in the film, the screen goes dark as the scientist sends his henchmen out into the audience to seek new victims. From 35mm. \$180

SINTIA: THE DEVIL'S DOLL (1970) Shula Roan, Diane Webster. Weird, nightmarish stuff from Ray Dennis Steckler. A young girl has strange, twisted dreams of killing her father. Devil Possession? Definitely rated "R". From 16mm. \$181

BEAST OF THE YELLOW NIGHT (1971) John Ashley, Mary Wilcox. A wicked out disciple of the Devil is able to absorb evil from the souls of the people he murders. He eventually turns into a horrible monster. Roger Corman was executive producer. From 35mm. \$182

DEVIL TIMES FIVE (1974) Gene Evans, Sorrell Books, Lell Cornell. A macabre story of torture and murder at a mountain refuge. The culprits are five children who have escaped from a mental institution. From 16mm. \$183



Returned from the dead
to stalk human prey...

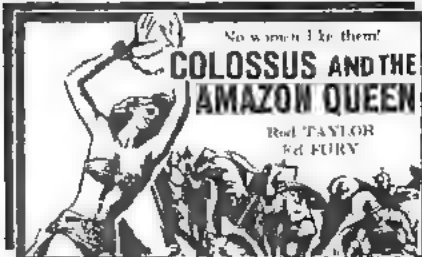


SWORD AND SANDAL

FABOLA (1951) Michele Morgan, Henri Vidal, Michel Simon. The granddaddy of all Italian spectacle films. Court intrigue abounds as merciless Roman aristocrats plot the genocide of Christians before the arrival of Constantine. Rated 4 stars by Leonard Maltin. From 16mm. \$563

GLADIATORS OF ROME (1962) Gordon Scott, Wendie Guida, Roberto Risi. IN COLOR FOR THE FIRST TIME. Scott plays a muscular hero who protects a slave girl (secretly a princess) from murdering Roman warriors. He eventually ends up in the arena. From 16mm. \$564

THE VAMPIRES (1964) Gordon Scott, Ganna Maria Canale. The mighty Gollath is pitted against an evil vampire and his army of faceless robots. Color from 16mm. \$565



COLOSSUS AND THE AMAZON QUEEN (1964) Rod Taylor, Ed Fury, Dorian Gray. Two Trojan war veterans are hired to take a ship to a far off island. They arrive to find it inhabited by lusty Amazons! Color, from 16mm. \$556

HERCULES OF THE DESERT (1964) Kirk Morris, Helene Charel. Hercules comes to the aid of nomads who are being suppressed by evil princess. Color, from 16mm. \$567

FANTASY

DAY THE EARTH FROZE (1956) Nina Anderson, Jon Powers, Peter Sorenson. A superb Finnish/Soviet fantasy epic about an evil witch who steals the sun and causes just about everything on the Earth to freeze. Color, from 16mm. F019

THE MAGIC FOUNTAIN (1961) Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Hans Conried. An evil dwarf changes princes into ravens. Based on a Grimm Bros. fairy tale. Color from 16mm. F010

SILENT THRILLS

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE (1913) King Baggot, Jane Gail, Matt Snyder. The first Universal horror film. Baggot, who was a big star in the early days of the company, plays the title role in this early, silent horror classic. From 16mm. \$T33

THE AVENTURE CONSCIENCE (1914, aka **THE TELL-TALE HEART**) Henry B. Walthall, Blanche Sweet, Mae Marsh, Robert Harlan. An extremely well done D. W. Griffith opus, which is arguably the first major horror film. Based on elements from three Poe classics: **THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM**, **THE TELL-TALE HEART**, and **ANNABEL LEE**. From 16mm. \$T34

COAST PATROL (1925) Fay Wray, Kenneth McDonald. A daring Federal agent is assigned to stop the activities of a murderous gang of smugglers. A sexy ex-conv helps the agent bring the smugglers to justice. From 16mm. \$T35

SHIPS OF THE NIGHT (1928) Jacqueline Logan, Solih, Jack Mower, Andy Clyde. A beautiful adventures encounters heartstopping adventures involving criminals, pirates, and horom slaves as she searches for her fugitive brother, who wounded a man that was later found viciously murdered. From 16mm. \$T36

BELOW THE DEADLINE (1929) Frank Leigh, Barbara Worth, Arthur Rankin. An innocent man is framed for embezzlement by a gang of cunning criminals. A sympathetic detective sets him free so he can clear himself. From 16mm. \$T37

EXPLOITATION

GUN GIPS (1956) Timothy Farrell, Jean Ferguson, Jacquelyn Parks. Gun toting babes are on the prowl, holding up everything and everybody in sight. An exploitation masterpiece that reeks of that magical Ed Woodian hilarity. From 35mm. X060

THE NARCOTIC STORY (1956) Narrated by Art Gilmore. A lurid expose about the evils of heroin addiction. The depiction of burned out heroin addicts is pretty hilarious. This stuff was supposed to scare us when we were kids. From 35mm. X061

PRIME TIME (aka **HELLKITTEN**) (1960) Joe Ann McComie, Frank Roche, Karen Black. Directed by H.G. Lewis. A fairly raucy story about a young girl who gets involved with teenage vigilantes, a shiny detective and a beatnik artist who forces her to pose nude. Rated 'R'. From 35mm. X062



COMMONLAW WIFE (1963) Anne MacArdams, Max Anderson, Lucy Kelly. A brickhouse sex kitten makes the move on everyone from young studs to old men. (She has a good time doing it, too). The ending is gritty and shocking. A terrific party film. Rated 'R'. From 35mm. X053

SECRET FILE, HOLLYWOOD (1962, aka **SCANDALTOWN**) Robert Clarke, Franchina York, Syd Mason. Your jaw will drop at this must-see, schlock hall of lamer. An extremely campy story about an ex-detective who digs up dirt for a Hollywood scandal sheet. One of his stories causes a lady to commit suicide. You can see the microphone hanging down in half the film! (no exaggeration). It's incredible this film was even released. From 35mm. X064

HAUGHTY NEW ORLEANS (1962) Sonny, Rita Parker, Porfirio and Kinney Steel. No storyline to follow, just sit back and enjoy this nostalgic lineup of old burlesque routines. From 35mm. X065

SAVAGES FROM HELL (1963) William Kelley, Viola Boyd, Bobbie Byers. The leader of a vicious motorcycle gang kidnaps a farmworker's daughter. He also beats her brother for messing around with his woman. From 35mm. X066

SHANTY TRAMP (1966) Sil Rogers, produced by K. Gordon Murray. A sleazy evangelist puts the move on a small town's shanty tramp. She makes a move on a local black kid which almost gets him lynched. From 35mm. X067

JUVENILE SCHLOCK

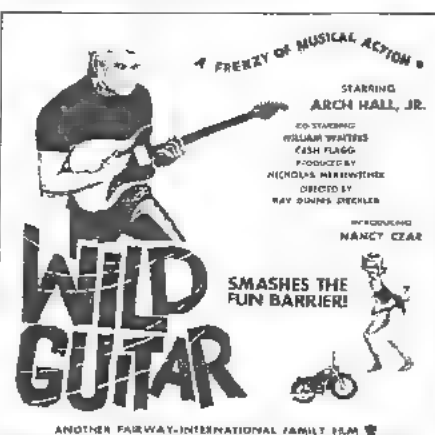


THE FLAMING TEEN-AGE (1966) Noel Rayburn, Ethel Barnett, Jerry Frank. What's happening to our kids these days, anyway. Alcohol and drug abuse, withdrawal, wild makeout scenes, robbery, and jail are just a few of the delicate topics covered in this rare J.D. epic. Some of the oldest 'teenagers' ever seen on screen. From 35mm. J522

THE BLOODY BROOD (1959) Peter Falk, Jack Belts, Barbara Lord. A brutal film about a drug dealing gang of beatniks who get their kicks by perverse and violent means. (They feed a boy some food laced with ground glass). Extremely well done for such a low budget vehicle. From 35mm. J523

THE BEATNIKS (1960) (1960) Tony Travis, Peter Brock, Karen Kader. The good looking leader of a beatnik gang is heard singing along with a jukebox by a talent scout who offers him the big time. His buddy isn't too crazy about him breaking from the gang and causes trouble. From 35mm. J524

WILD GUITAR (1962) Arch Hall, Jr., Arch Hall, Sr., Ray Dennis Steckler. A young Arch, Jr. is given a shot at the big time by the unscrupulous owner of a small record company played by Arch, Sr. (aka William Waters). This movie is a real, hilarious gagster. From 35mm. J525



EDGAR WALLACE & CO.

FORGER OF LONDON (1961) Eddie Arent, Karin Dor, Helmut Lange. Scotland Yard investigates a clever ring of counterfeiters. The prime suspect is an amnesiac playboy. From 16mm. EW06

WHY ON THE RIVER (1962) Klaus Kinski, Joachim Fuchsjäger, Brigitte Brothem. Scotland Yard investigates a grisly series of murders being orchestrated by a master criminal known as 'The Shark'. From 6mm. EW07

STRANGLER OF BLACKMOOR CASTLE (1963) Karin Dor, Ingmar Zalsberg. A hooded fiend is murdering people inside a creepy old English castle. Scotland Yard sends an investigator to track down the killer. From 16mm. H073

THE INDIAN SCARF (1963) Klaus Kinski, Heinz Drache, Conny Collins. The heirs to a dead man's fortune are being strangled one by one. The action centers around the dead man's creepy country estate. From 16mm. EW08

THE MAD EXECUTIONERS (1963) Wolfgang Preiss, Chris Howland, Maria Perschy. A mad scientist decapitates his victims and tries to keep their heads alive. Scotland Yard investigates. From 16mm. H078

THE MYSTERIOUS MAGICIAN (1965) Joachim Fuchsjäger, Eddie Arent, Heinz Drache. Though thought by Scotland Yard to be dead, the mad murderer known as 'The Wizard' is alive and spreading a new reign of terror throughout London. From 16mm. EW09

MYSTERY-SUSPENSE-FILM NOIR

BULLDOG DRUMMOND AT BAY (1937) John Lodge, Victor Jory, Dorothy Mackall, Hugh Miller. This time we find Drummond up against foreign agents trying to steal plans for a top-secret aircraft. Lodge is quite good in the title role. From 16mm. M210

DEVIL DIAMOND (1937) Kane Richmond, Frankie Darro. Two amateur detectives find their lives in danger when they track down a gang of evil jewel thieves. From 16mm. M211

THE MYSTIC CIRCLE MURDER (1938) Robert Hale, Helene Leberhohn, Robert Frazer, Madame Harry Houdini. A phony mystic known as the Great La Gagee cons an unsuspecting woman of their fortunes. One of his late apparitions even causes heart attack. Houdini sets the record straight about life after death. From 16mm. M212

THE PANTHER'S CLAW (1942) Sidney Blackmer, Lynn Starr, Byron Foulger. An interesting PRC mystery about a ruthless killer in an opera company. Foulger is excellent as a topish suspect. From 16mm. M213

BIG TOWN (1947, aka **QUILTY ASSIGNMENT**) Philip Reed, Robert Lowery, Hilary Brooks. A newspaper editor and a reporter solve a series of murders. Editor begins to go corrupt. From 16mm. M214

TRAPPED (1949) Lloyd Bridges, John Hoyt, Barbara Payton. Treasury agents try to crack a ruthless ring of counterfeiters. They allow a criminal to escape hoping he will lead them to the gang. From 16mm. M215

THE SWINDLE (1955) Broderick Crawford, Richard Basehart. Directed by Federico Fellini. Interesting story of three con men who fleece the poor people of Rome out of their money. From 16mm. M216

MURDER AT 45 R.P.M. (1961) Danielle Darrieux, Michael Auclair. A singer is haunted by her dead husband. This, needless to say, causes problems between her and her new lover. From 16mm. M217

STAKEOUT (1962) Bing Russell, Bill Hale, Eve Brent. An interesting story about an ex-con and his young son who can't find work because of the father's criminal record. He eventually turns back to crime. From 16mm. M218

SPYS, ESPIONAGE, & INTRIGUE

LADIES MAN (1962) Eddie Constantine. One of Eddie's many portrayals as super sleuth/agent, Lemmy Caution. This time the action is set on the French Riviera. From 16mm. SP06

AS IF IT WERE RAINING (1963) Eddie Constantine, Henri Cogan, Elsa Montes. In this thriller we find Eddie in Spain where he becomes involved with an embezzlement scheme. From 16mm. SP07

MISSION TO VENICE (1963) Sean Flynn, Madeline Robinson. Enol's son, Sean plays a sleuth attempting to find a missing husband. He stumbles upon a ring of spies in the process. From 16mm. SP08

LIGHTNING BOLT (1965) Anthony Esley, Diana Lorya. A secret agent goes after a madman who deflects moon rockets launched from Cape Kennedy by blasting them out of the sky with laser beams. Much in the spirit of James Bond with a nice blend of sci-fi and espionage. From 16mm. SP09

RED DRAGON (1967) Stewart Granger, Rosanna Schialino, Horst Fank. Stewart and Rosanna play agents in Hong Kong trying to crack a notorious smuggling ring. From a Technicolor 35mm print. SP10



Vampires Over

HOLLYWOOD

Report
by
Drew
Sullivan

The prevailing emotion of the novel is a screaming horror of female sexuality.

—George Stade

Jonathan Harker, young, handsome, strait-laced, and more than a trifle preoccupied with matters pecuniary, has just bid goodnight to his aged, aristocratic host. Exploring the remote Transylvanian castle to which he has traveled on business, Harker finds himself in a lonely tower bedchamber—but is he really alone? Drifting off to sleep, he wakes to discover three ravishing beauties caressing his legs, his loins, his chest, his throat. . . .

The corrupt, ruby-lipped triad bicker over their prize. The youngest of the three shreds Harker's shirt, licks his chest, removes with her sharp, pointed teeth the crucifix given him by superstitious peasants. . . .

The voluptuous brides, casting no reflection in the nearby mirror, surround Harker, straddling him, kissing him obscenely. The youngest jabs razor-sharp fingernails into his trouser legs and rips them down to the knees. . . .

Then, suddenly, he is upon them! Cursing his brides, tossing the youngest across the chamber and against a stone wall—to which she sticks like a fly—Count Dracula, the Lord of the Undead, makes his powerful presence felt.

Whether audiences will get to see Keanu Reeves, playing the prim and proper Jonathan Harker, ravaged by Monica Bellucci,

Michaela Bercu, and Florina Kendrick, playing the blood-lusting brides of Dracula, depends largely on whether Francis Ford Coppola finds *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*—the director's first horror film since 1963's *DEMENTIA 13*—ravaged by the MPAA, the censorship arm of the motion-picture industry. According to recent reports, the MPAA has strongly suggested that the film's violence be toned down; whether *DRACULA*'s several sex scenes will also go the way of all flesh in order to ensure an R rating, instead of a financially ruinous NC-17 or X, remains to be seen—or unseen.

The "bridal sequence," claims American Zoetrope president and *DRACULA* producer Fred Fuchs, will be every inch as sensual as originally scripted by James V. Hart. "It's there. Obviously, if it was an NC-17 film it would go further, but it's not. It's still very erotic."

BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA, scheduled for release in late fall, has been highly touted as the most faithful version of Stoker's novel ever to be brought to the screen. Fuchs concurs. "First and foremost, the reason Francis Coppola was attracted to the project was that it was based on the original literary work and had never been done before. The unique thing about our picture is that it is *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*. We actually do an interpretation of the original Gothic novel. Most people think of the authentic Dracula as being Bela Lugosi's horror film for Universal, which was actually based on a play and not on the book."

Nevertheless, the new film version of literature's most venerable tale of vampirism contains a few scenes, at least, that read-



© 1931 Universal

*DRACULA then and now. ABOVE: The vampire's brides (including actresses Jeraldine Dvorak and Dorothy Tree) surround the prostrate form of Harker-substitute Renfield (Dwight Frye) in Universal's 1931 classic. RIGHT: The brides in *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA*, played by Monica Bellucci, Michaela Bercu, and Florina Kendrick.*



Photo by Rupert Nelson



LEFT and TOP RIGHT: In contrast to his somewhat chaste leave-taking of fiancée Mina Murray (Winona Ryder), Jonathan Harker (Keanu Reeves) tastes the pleasures of the flesh with Dracula's brides (Monica Bellucci, Michaela Bercu, and Florina Kendrick). Too bad the flesh is dead. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Professor Abraham Van Helsing (Anthony Hopkins) and his fellow vampire hunters (Keanu Reeves, Bill Campbell, Cary Elwes, and Richard E. Grant) confront the King of the Undead (Gary Oldman) in his bat-creature form.

ers won't find between the covers of Stoker's book. "We actually bring to the screen the historical character that Stoker based Dracula upon. In this movie, we incorporate the historical figure and you see how this prince, Vlad the Impaler, became a vampire and how the Dracula legend was born."

There is also a steamy love affair for Dracula and Mina Harker, who, unlike the Mina of Stoker's Victorian thriller, is the reincarnation of the Count's lost love. "Of course," says Fuchs, "what that means in terms of the subject matter is that, instead of just being a horror film, it's a romance. It's a love story."

It's also, claim vampire mavens, remarkably similar in plot to the 1973 television production of *DRACULA*, scripted by Richard Matheson and produced and directed by Dan Curtis—the major difference being that in the 1973 version it isn't Mina, but her friend, Lucy Westenra, who is the reincarnation of Dracula's significant other.

According to a source at Dan Curtis Productions, "When Dan did it, in '73 with Jack Palance, Lucy was the image of Dracula's love from his human life. He called her Marya. Dan conceived the situation, much the same situation as that with Josette, Victoria, and Barnabas in *DARK SHADOWS*."

None of which would matter very much if *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA* were being proclaimed by its creators as faithful to Matheson's teleplay rather than Stoker's book.

Still, the film has much—very much—to recommend it. The cast is especially impressive: Besides Reeves as Jonathan Harker,

BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA stars Gary Oldman and Anthony Hopkins as Count Dracula and Professor Van Helsing, respectively, with Winona Ryder as Mina; Cary Elwes as Arthur Holmwood; Richard E. Grant as Dr. Seward; Bill Campbell as Quincey Morris; Sadie Frost as Lucy; and Tom Waits as that old flycatcher, Renfield. Whether *BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA* will finally give vampire lovers the true King of the Undead or just another pretender to the throne remains to be seen, but the talents of its cast and crew are sufficiently brilliant to give rise to hope.



BRAM STOKER'S DRACULA won't mark the only appearance of Hollywood's prime bloodsucker in the coming months. Slated for early 1993 release is *ROGER CORMAN'S DRACULA RISING*, one of two Corman produced vampire flicks flapping our way. The second, *TO SLEEP WITH A VAMPIRE*, stars *FAMILY TIES* veteran Scott Valentine as a lonely nosferatu who, according to the press release, "seeks salvation and daylight through a prostitute he meets in Los Angeles." (It sounds like he'd have better luck if he dumped the hooker for a nun with a sun roof.)

DRACULA RISING, written by Rodman Flender and directed by Fred Gallo, concerns a beautiful art historian who encounters a mysterious stranger at a party. Soon afterwards, she is given the opportunity to restore frescoes in an ancient monastery in Romania. Surprise: The mysterious stranger turns out to be our old pal Dracula! Surprise, Surprise: The beautiful art historian turns out to be the reincarnation of Drac's lost love! (If it wasn't



ABOVE and TOP RIGHT: Christopher Atkins makes a monk out of himself as a young Trappist who, following a bit of necking, becomes Dracula, the Lord of the Undead. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Here's one Valentine even Charlie Brown won't want to get through the mails: Scott Valentine in Roger Corman's *TO SLEEP WITH A VAMPIRE*.

for the fact that he's still very much alive, one might think that the scripters of Tinseltown's upcoming vampire films were all reincarnations of Richard Matheson.)

ROGER CORMAN'S *DRACULA RISING* stars Stacy Travis as the object of Dracula's immortal obsession. As the Vampire King himself, blonde, blue-eyed Christopher Atkins abandons *THE BLUE LAGOON* for a scarlet river of you-know-what, and his g-string, presumably, for a tux, cape, and fangs.



Photos this page courtesy Concordia Productions



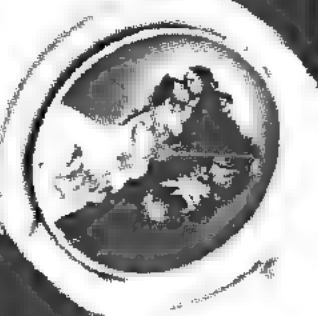
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Topps Stoked about Dracula

Report by Buddy Scalera

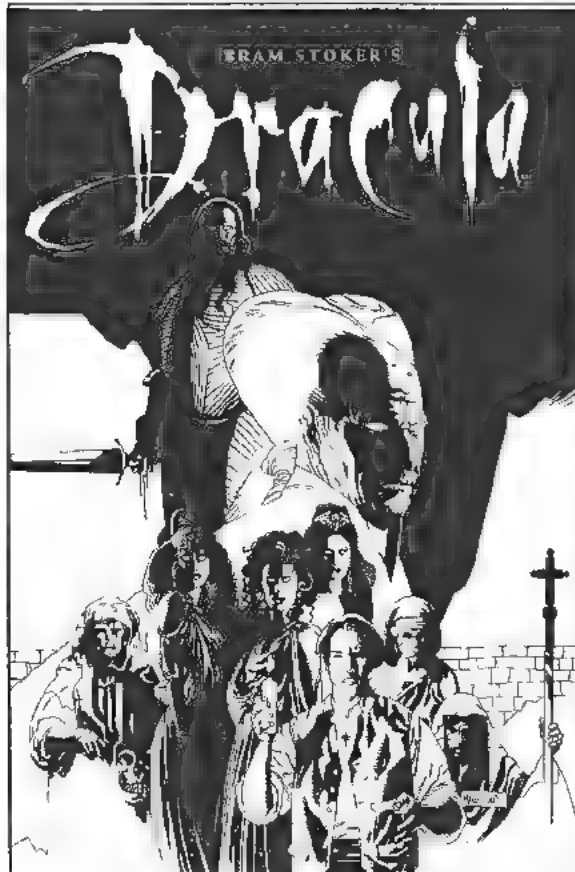
Bram Stoker never had it so good. A recent flush of modern media attention will breathe new life into his 95-year-old tale of *Dracula*, and the Topps Company's new comic-book division will afford a whole new generation the opportunity to be terrified by the magnetic death of the undead with *Bram Stoker's Dracula: The Comic*.

Tying in with the Francis Ford Coppola movie, the four-issue series is complete with striking artwork by *Gotham by Gaslight* veteran Mike Mignola. The comic was scripted by Roy Thomas, who closely followed James V. Hart's screenplay. "My feeling was that being faithful to the screenplay was the best thing we could possibly do," says Thomas. "I wanted to duplicate the movie-going experience to the best of my ability."

According to Mignola, certain aspects of his artwork for *Castle Dracula* were incorporated into the actual set design when Coppola viewed preview illustrations from the comic. "I later worked with Roman [Coppola, second-unit director] and did drawings based on the model they had—drawings that made certain aspects of the castle clearer."

This is the 40-plus-year-old trading-card company's debut in the comic world. Company officials are somewhat secretive about plans for future comics. However, they readily admit that there are a number of potential projects already in various stages of production.

As expected, this and every comic project Topps produces will come with high-quality trading cards. Fans of *Bram Stoker's Dracula* will be treated to several collector sets featuring various elements of the movie. Each issue of the comic comes complete with four cards of a 16-card set, none of which are part of a separate 100-card set.



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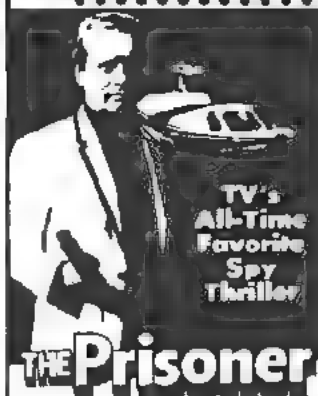
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Vampires over Pittsburgh

John Landis
Interviewed by
Kevin G. Shinnick

Dracula isn't the only vampire bat-winging his way to local movie screens this fall. Here's director John Landis to tell us all about **INNOCENT BLOOD** and werewolves in London...

Scarlet Street: *INNOCENT BLOOD* asks the question: Which is worse, the Mob or the undead?

John Landis: By the end of the movie, there are a lot of vampires, but in the beginning there's only one. Marie is, in fact, the heroine of the piece. She is essentially a tragic and solitary figure, who meets a cop, Joe, who's undercover in the Mob. Someone at Warner Brothers came up with this line: "The undead joins forces with the undercover." They're trying to get this guy Macelli, who's brilliantly played by Robert Loggia.

SS: He must be marvelous.

JL: Oh, God! He's great! He really gives a balls-out performance; it's tour de force and it's wonderful. There are moments in this movie when he's absolutely terrifying and brilliantly funny at the same moment.

SS: That's a tough balance.

JL: Yeah, it's extraordinary. But this character Sal Macelli, this Mafia chieftain, is a sociopath. He is a genuinely evil character. There's a Mob war going on, and Marie sees this as a perfect opportunity, because she can feed and not take "innocent blood," not kill an innocent person. What

happens, of course, is that when she's attempting to "dine Italian"—attempting to eat Sal—his gorillas come in; she's wounded and must escape before she can destroy him. Sal wakes up rather disoriented in the morgue. And what you have, now, is a sociopath with supernatural powers. He's like the Mussolini of the vampires.

SS: That's a great image.

JL: He's quite wonderful. I mean, I'm thrilled with Bob Loggia. He really took risks, you know? Very ballsy things.

SS: Have you had any trouble with censorship on *INNOCENT BLOOD*?

JL: I just had a fight with the MPAA. I'm very unhappy. I had a very erotic love scene that they made me trim.

SS: You had trouble with censorship on *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON*, too, didn't you?

JL: *WEREWOLF* was given an X rating at that time. I had to cut out the two biggest scares in the movie.

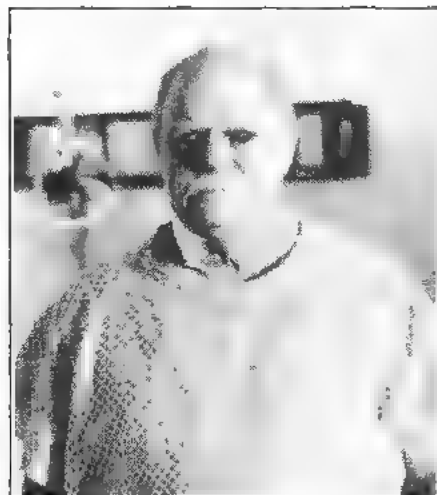
SS: Really? Well, there was quite a lot left.

JL: A director once made a very apt remark: "The audience never misses what it hasn't seen." The MPAA is a necessary evil in that the whole point of industry self-regulation is to prevent government censorship, which the government—especially this reactionary Nazi-Republican government we've had for the past 12 years—is very anxious to have. I mean, this whole "Cop Killer" thing with Ice Tea—Ice Tea can't sing "Cop Killer," but Eric Clapton can sing "I Shot The Sheriff."

SS: That's true.

JL: But I did not shoot the deputy. Worse, why is it that Arnold Schwarzenegger, in *TERMINATOR*, can kill the most police in the history of motion pictures? But he's Republican and white, so I guess it's okay. You see, the whole danger of censorship is, by definition, irrational. It's totally arbitrary and completely subjective. It depends on what the MPAA had

for lunch that day. I mean, I had this insane thing on *INNOCENT BLOOD*. At one point, the vampire shoves a gun in his mouth and fires, and you see the bullet leave the back of his head. Very lovely effect. Quite shocking, but very fast. And the MPAA said, "You can't show that." And I said, "Well, why can't I show that in an R-rated



ABOVE: Don Rickles—actor, comic, heckler, vampire. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Marie (Anne Parillaud) puts the bite on mobster Sal Macelli (Robert Loggia) in *INNOCENT BLOOD*, directed by John Landis.

film?" They said, "Well, you can't show the brains being blown apart." And I said, "What are you talking about? What about JFK? Where you see, not only a man shot in the head, but the President's brain coming out of his head repeatedly, in slow motion!"

SS: True!

JL: And you know what they said? "Well, that's history." So, go figure. You can show a living President's brains coming out the back of his head, but you can't show it if it's a creature of fantasy.

SS: It is unusual.

JL: Censorship is irrational. There are people out there who try to ban *Huckleberry Finn*, *Catcher in the Rye*—these people are nuts. The MPAA's function is to avoid government regulation, and you get this weird thing where a movie's rated PG13 or R and parents complain about it. And you say, "Well, can't you read? Don't you see what it says?"

SS: What brought you back to horror films after 11 years?

JL: I was actually involved in another vampire film called *RED SLEEP*. I was attracted to the subject matter: What if Elvis was a vampire? What if the King of Vegas was a creature of the night?

SS: You mean he's not? He keeps popping up in the Enquirer.





Anne Parillaud portrays Marie, a beautiful vampire, in Warner Brothers' *INNOCENT BLOOD*, a contemporary horror film spiked with humor in the vein of John Landis' own *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON*.

JL: (Laughs) Anyway, it was extremely outrageous. Warner Brothers took one look and said, "Here! Do this instead!"

SS: Any future horror plans?

JL: Well, I just gave Polygram the script for the sequel to *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON*. They asked me to do a sequel, and I got this idea that takes place 12 years after the first one. It

involves almost the entire original cast, even though a lot of them are dead, and it's pretty wild. The problem is, with inflation, it's very expensive to make films in London right now. I mean, it has to be made in London; it uses the city quite a bit.

SS: We understand that you got the idea for *WEREWOLF* when you were in...

JL: Yugoslavia. I was a flunky, a gopher, on *KELLY'S HEROES*. I met Rickles, Eastwood, Sutherland—all these people, when I was 18 years old. I was inspired to write it because of something I witnessed. The locals were burying this guy; he was wrapped in a canvas shroud; they had rosaries and garlic wrapped around the body, and they were burying him feet first at a crossroads. There was a priest, peasants; this was 1969, but they looked like dress extras from *THE WOLF MAN*. I was told that this guy had raped and killed a young girl, and they were burying him this way so that his body wouldn't get up! I remember thinking it was funny, and then I thought, "What would happen if that body got up?" I mean, nothing in my background enabled me to deal with that, because sophisticated and/or educated people have no basis to deal with something that's completely beyond their experience.

SS: *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF* started a whole werewolf craze...

JL: I wrote that script, as I said, in 1969, and it was essentially the same film that I made in 1981. And one of the reasons I couldn't get it made earlier was that people said, "Werewolves? Who gives a shit? Wolfmen? Get outta here!" And yet, within a year of that movie, there was *THE HOWLING*, *THE WOLFEN*, *TEEN WOLF*, *MY STEPFATHER IS A WERE-WOLF*! I thought, "What the fuck's goin' on?" And the same thing with vampires, now. Some of that is Roger Corman ripping people off, you know? (Laughs)

John Landis' first horror hit was 1983's *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON*, starring David Naughton before and after he developed five-o'clock shadow.



Roger will jump on anything. He is the classic exploitation filmmaker.

SS: How do you feel about competing with Coppola's *DRACULA*?

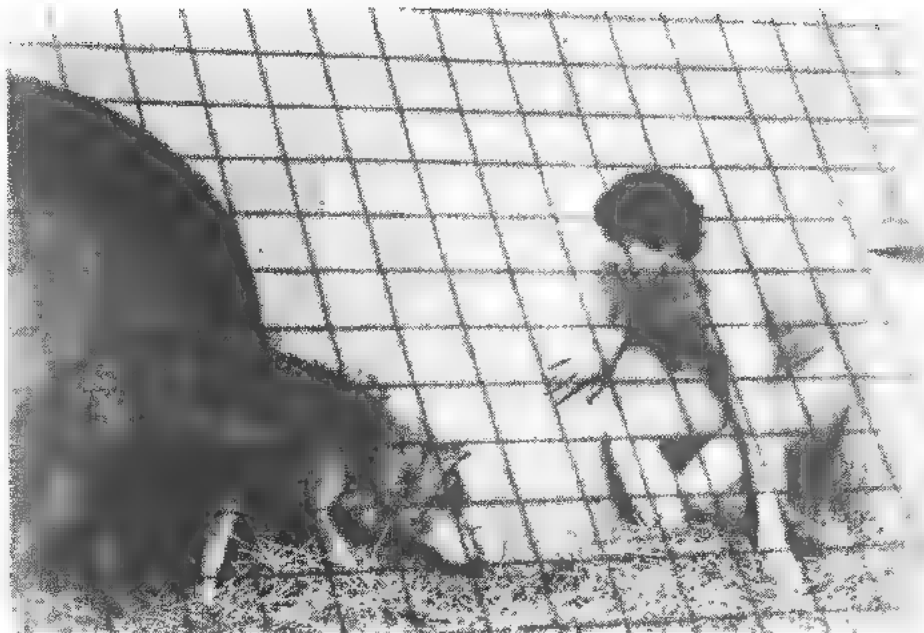
JL: Well, I can't wait to see it. You know, I wanted to make *DRACULA* in '78. I felt that Frank Langella was wrong, but Walter Mirisch, the producer, felt strongly that Langella was the reason the revival on Broadway was a hit. I felt that Bram Stoker and Edward Gorey were the reasons. Regardless, I didn't get to make it. I've tried to make *DRACULA* three times and failed. People say, "Well, the Langella movie didn't make any money."

SS: Well, it lost the humor...

JL: The play was high camp. I wasn't interested in high camp. I hope Francis is going for true Gothic horror. It's period, it's stylized, while *INNOCENT BLOOD* is contemporary. The idea is to take something mythical and make it real in contemporary society. That was the brilliance of *KING KONG*. One of the things that it did so brilliantly was to take this primitive beast—"He was a God in his world!"—and put him in Manhattan. Fabulous!

SS: What is the origin of the phrase "See you next Wednesday," which turns up repeatedly in your films?

JL: Oh, it's so boring. It's a line of dialogue from 2001. I had written a screenplay as a teenager, essentially a musical autobiography of me if I died at 17. Like a



David Naughton's role in *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF* cost him lucrative employment in a popular series of Dr. Pepper commercials. The soda company objected to Naughton's costume—namely, no costume at all—in several scenes.

lot of things you do as a teenager, it's very angst-ridden and insane, and it's called *SEE YOU NEXT WEDNESDAY*. The phrase is not in everything I do; it's only in films where I steal from that script.

SS: Like a Hitchcock cameo...

JL: You know, he's in *INNOCENT BLOOD*. Hitch does a cameo in my movie.

SS: That must have been rather difficult to arrange.

JL: You'll have to see it. Honestly, he really does.

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Sherlock Holmes ^{as} ~~Vs~~ Dracula

Photo by Kenn Duncan

by Jessie Lilley

In 1978, with the 50-year-old play **DRACULA** a smash hit on Broadway, Jeremy Brett joined the ranks of actors touring the country in the venerable old thriller. *Scarlet Street* asked Our Favorite Sherlock about his experiences treading the boards as the King of the Undead, and got in a question or two about his most recent vampiric encounter. . .

Scarlet Street: Didn't you play Count Dracula on Broadway?

Jeremy Brett: No, I was the West Coast Dracula. I was asked to go to Broadway for four weeks, but unfortunately, I had to do something else. You see, I'd just finished playing Max DeWinter in **REBECCA**, and I was flying back to Los Angeles. I was approached by Elizabeth McCann and Nelle Nugent, two of New York's finest producers. They said, "We want you to play Dracula." So I said, "Well, can I see it?" I went to see it in New York and it was being played by the brilliant Frank Langella. I remember, by the end of Act Two, thinking, "God! Yes, please!" They said, "We're sending you for a week's rehearsal, Mr. Brett, with this gentleman." And I said, "A week? Well, what's it for?" They said, "To practice the cape."

SS: The cape?

JB: On his first entrance, Dracula removes his beautiful cape and says, "Good evening, Dr. Seward. I hope you're feeling well this evening." And with that he releases the clasp of the cape and twists it with enormous dexterity—the cape was weighted—so that it lands behind him in the maid's arms. Well, when Frank did it he brought the house down; I remember the audience applauded for a full minute. The first night I did it, with the adrenaline pumping through my veins, the cloak went straight out of the door and flew like a bat into the night!

SS: Oh, no!

JB: Lost my cape; it went all over the maid. She was fighting for air under all the velvet. Sheer adrenaline.

SS: You played *Chicago*...

JB: It was first night and they closed the stage door at that time; the actors had to

leave through the front of the theatre. There was a brilliant lady—she was one of the most brilliant and dangerous critics in the world, especially in Chicago. She didn't like the play, but she liked me, so glory be to God. Anyway, I came out through the audience, and she'd sent this enormous plant, and I thought, "Oh, God! I'd better take this home. I can't leave it in the theatre to die." And so I moved through the foyer and there were about 20 members of the audience left, waiting for taxis and cars. It was a real winter's night in Chicago. I stepped out from the glass security onto the pavement, like an English twit, thinking I could hail a taxi. Of course, it was about 12 below. And the first thing that happened was my plant collapsed. I stepped back into the lobby and a very sweet old couple said, "Mr. Brett, what are you doing?" I said, "Looking for a taxi." With this pathetically dead plant in my arms. They gave me a lift back to the hotel, and I kept thinking, "Oh, dear, the plant's dead. I hope the show's a success."

SS: Recently, you completed **THE LAST VAMPYRE**. You were a bit anxious about retaining the quality of the original Sherlock Holmes stories in a two-hour format.

JB: Oh! I've been worried for about two years, now, because we're stepping outside the Canon. You see, if you take a short story and increase it to two hours, then you're at feature-film length, and you're outside Doyle. On the other hand, I've been very lucky. I have two marvelous adaptors; one is called Jeremy Paul and the other is called Trevor Bowen.

SS: They are wonderful writers.

JB: Something else has happened. My producer, June Wyndham Davies, said to me the other day, "You cannot expect the adaptors to write the deductions. You cannot expect them to do a Doyle deduction.

Listen, you've played this part for very nearly 10 years; you do it." So in both **THE LAST VAMPYRE** and **THE NOBLE BACHELOR**, I have two amazing pieces of deduction. And after I've done them on screen, I go for a walk, I look up into the sky and say, "Doyle! All right?" And I haven't had a thunderbolt through my head yet.

SS: (Laughs) So you're actually writing...

JB: The deductions, yes. In **THE LAST VAMPYRE**, for example, I work out geometrically how something happened. It's all a question of light, degree, and angle. Very geometric.

SS: Right now you're busy filming **THE NOBLE BACHELOR**.

JB: In that, I have an amazing piece of deduction, which is very like that in **THE BLUE CARBUNCLE**. A woman knocks at the door and, by the time she reaches the apartment on the first floor, Holmes has deduced everything about her. I can give you the speech.

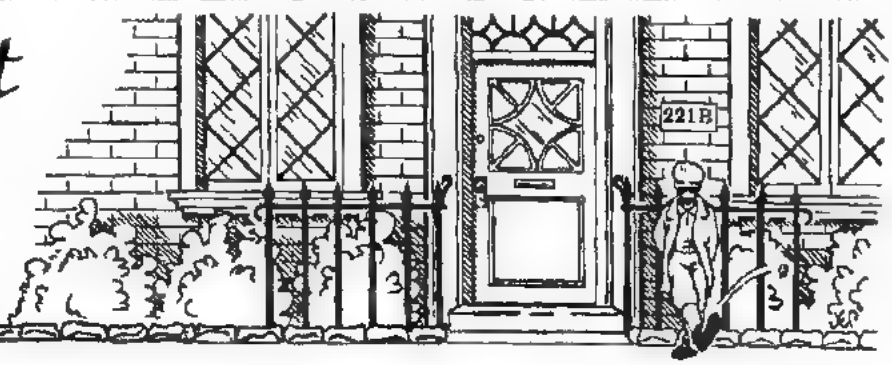
SS: By all means!

Continued on page 100



Jeremy Brett as Count Dracula

Baker Street Regular



Holmes' Sweet Home An Interview with Rosalie Williams

by Richard Valley

"Good old Watson!" proclaims Sherlock Holmes to his long-time companion in the closing moments of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *His Last Bow*. "You are the one fixed point in a changing age."

Clever as usual, Mr. Holmes—and yet Dr. John H. Watson was scarcely the one fixed point, not in the world of the world's greatest detective. Emphasize the word "fixed," for instance, in that wry accolade, and instantly the sedentary Mycroft Holmes, who rarely rose from his chair in the Diogenes Club, leaps lethargically to mind. Inspector G. Lestrade, who never, to our knowledge, gained promotion, was certainly a fixed point as far as Scotland Yard was concerned. And what about the residents of 221B Baker Street? Without question the one fixed point at that celebrated address was not Watson, who fled repeatedly to wed one woman or another; nor was it Billy the page, who appeared only sporadically. No, the one fixed point, the woman in the home life of Sherlock Holmes, was Mrs. (Martha?) Hudson, of glorious and praiseworthy memory.

And she could cook, too.

Conan Doyle, throughout the 56 short stories and four novels that make up the Holmes Canon, seldom did right by the woman. Nameless in *A Study in Scarlet*, Mrs. Hudson made her first christened appearance in the second novel, *The Sign of Four*. By the time he got around to writing "A Scandal in Bohemia," the first in the series of short tales, Conan Doyle had forgotten the good woman's name: A mysterious Mrs. Turner turned up in her place! Following that insult by omission, Mrs. Hudson appeared regularly, and actually managed a few shining moments: In "The Empty House" she risks life and limb to shift the bust of Holmes that Colonel Sebastian Moran is aiming at with his deadly air gun, in "The Naval Treaty" she serves a fine Scotch breakfast containing the title document, and, in "The Dying Detective," she rushes to Watson's home to tell the good doctor that Holmes is rapping on death's door.

Richard Valley is an award-winning playwright and editor-in-chief of Scarlet Street.

Unhappily, the character got off to a poor start on the stage, too. William Gillette omitted her entirely from his smash hit, *SHERLOCK HOLMES*, creating the character of Billy in her stead. Conan Doyle followed Gillette's lead in his stage adaptation of "The Speckled Band," adding Billy and subtracting Mrs. Hudson. In *THE CROWN DIAMOND*, which Conan Doyle later turned into the story "The Mazarin Stone," the boy again stood in for the woman. Among the other plays minus the character: J. E. Harold-Terry and Arthur Rose's *THE RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* (1923) and Basil Mitchell's *THE HOLMESES OF BAKER STREET* (1933).

Mrs. Hudson assumed a more prominent role in two musical comedy versions of the Great Detective's adventures. In 1965's *BAKER STREET*, adapted in part from "A Scandal in Bohemia," "The Final Problem," and "The Empty House," the landlady was played by Paddy Edwards; although she had no solo turns, she was at least on the scene. *SHERLOCK HOLMES*, a less successful 1989 production, had a music hall Hudson (Julia Sutton) singing out her unrequited love for her star boarder in the song "A Lousy Life."

Radio, film, and television have turned out to be the proper spheres for Mrs. Hudson. Mary Gordon, the actress best known in the role (prior to Granada), lent support in most of the Basil Rathbone/Nigel Bruce films made between 1939 and 1946, and many episodes of the concurrent radio series. Earlier, Minnie Raynor played the landlady in four of five British films starring Arthur Wontner as Holmes, and earlier still Mme d'Esterre ruled the roost in a series of 47 silent shorts and features headlined by Eille Norwood. Mrs. Hudson was absent from Ronald Howard's 1954 TV program, but she was present and accounted for in 1951 (Iris Vandeleur, opposite Alan Wheatley as Holmes), 1965 (Enid Lindsey, opposite Douglas Wilmer), 1968 (Grace Arnold, opposite Peter Cushing), and 1980 (Kay Walsh, opposite Geoffrey Whitehead).

In 1984, Rosalie Williams stepped into the well-worn shoes of the Canon's well-loved landlady. Warned that it was in many respects "a thankless role," she found it to be nothing of the sort, as we learn in this exclusive *Scarlet Street* interview (beginning on page 26).

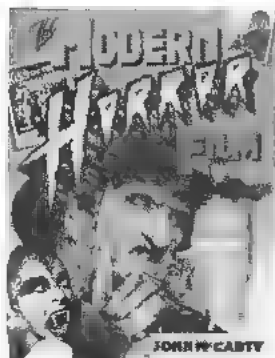
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Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are off on another case, leaving Mrs. Hudson to keep the Baker Street home fires burning. Pictured: Jeremy Brett, Rosalie Williams, and David Burke.

Rosalie Williams: Well, this is very exciting. I get letters from all over the States, you know, asking about Mrs. Hudson. *Scarlet Street: The Granada series is quite big over here.*

RW: Well, he does go on, doesn't he, this Sherlock Holmes? He'll never die, that's one thing that's certain.

SS: Before becoming involved with the series, were you a fan of Sherlock Holmes?

RW: To be truthful, I wasn't, but I had read the stories as a child. The books were always on our bookshelf in our family home. My son became a fan. When he was 13 or 14, I bought him a book and we read the stories together, but I'm certainly not what you would call a fan in the modern sense of the word.

SS: Prior to the Granada series, had you done any TV, radio, or film work related to

Sherlock Holmes?

RW: No, I hadn't. I had no involvement with Sherlock Holmes whatsoever. Most of my career had been in the theatre and, as far as I know, there haven't been many play adaptations of the stories. I may be wrong, but I've never been involved in any.

SS: How were you cast as Mrs. Hudson?

RW: Well, here, again, it was my theatre work. The producer of the series, Michael Cox, knew me from that. I was very, very lucky; I went for an interview and I don't think anyone else was even up for the part. And I was also lucky in that I had worked with Jeremy before, in the theatre.

SS: What had you done together?

RW: We had played Manchester in *O'HELLO*. I was Desdemona and he played one of the young gallants, Casio. I think he was. That was many years ago,

and we hadn't crossed paths since, but when we got together it was just as if there had been no break in between. We'd been great friends, you know? That does make working together very easy.

SS: Much easier, we expect, especially over the long period of time that you've been doing the series.

RW: Yes, it's unbelievable. It's about seven or eight years! (Laughs) It's hard to believe, but it has become part of us.

SS: Conan Doyle gives us virtually no background on the character of Mrs. Hudson. Did you fill in her history yourself?

RW: Oh, absolutely. When I was first cast I began to search through the books to find any reference to her; you know, to fill in the character. Of course, I came up with practically nothing at all. But one of the first decisions I made was not to play her Scottish, which she had been played several times before, I think, in films. Other actresses had played her Scottish, and I know that was only based on one line about Mrs. Hudson making porridge as well as any Scottish lady. But I'm not Scottish myself and I didn't want to play her with any particular dialect or accent, so that decision was made early on. The rest of the character I had to more or less build as we went along.

SS: How do you picture Mrs. Hudson's marriage, her husband, and the situation that she's in as a landlady?

RW: Well, what I decided—because you have to make this up; it isn't there—I decided that her husband was in the army and had been killed in action. She was widowed, and inherited the house in Baker Street, and took in boarders, you know, to keep herself together. I don't know whether you, as knowledgeable fans, can accept that as likely.

SS: That seems to be a good background for the character, actually. It seems to work perfectly within the context of the original stories.

RW: I feel, you see, that she is very much the owner of that property. She is not just a housekeeper/servant. That's something I feel when I play her, that she's the mistress of that house.

SS: That comes across very strongly.

RW: Yes. I do feel very strongly that she runs it her way and by her rules and that she's not just a working class employee. She has her standards. They're Victorian standards, they're very high standards, and that's how she prides herself.

SS: She runs it by her rules except when Sherlock Holmes is tossing papers all about his room.

RW: Exactly! This is where we come to something I feel about their relationship: Primarily, I think she has great affection. That's the first thing, because no way could she put up with that man, with his temperament and his tantrums, if she had not great affection. But he has to obey her rules to a certain extent because she is the

mistress, as I say, in that household. Because of this affection, and because she knows him so very well, she can anticipate his moves. She's almost like a mother to him. She can nurse him, she attends to all his needs, but she can also tell him off! I feel they're sparring partners, if you understand.

SS: Oh, yes. *She holds her ground.*

RW: When he throws a tantrum, she can come back at him. She may win or she may lose, but at the end of it, there will be a twinkle between them as if to say, "Well, you won that time. But I'll get you next time." It may only be a glance, you know, or a gesture. They're still—not good friends; that's not the right way to put it—but they understand each other and they live together in a sort of harmony.

SS: *We had some episodes broadcast in the States this past year, including THE ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT, in which Sherlock Holmes is beaten up by Baron Gruner's thugs. The scene with Mrs. Hudson nursing Holmes after he's been attacked shows the affection between the characters very clearly.*

RW: Ah, that one! We played it many times; we shot that scene many times to get it right, and I know what happens very often is they overshoot and then cut a lot after the rushes. Quite a lot has to be cut, unfortunately, to bring it down to the exact time of the program.

SS: *It's a quiet scene with you tending Holmes. Dr. Watson is falling asleep and*

you tell him to get some rest and be sure to lock the door. It has a nice feel between all three characters.

RW: Well, we do have this relationship on the set. I have to say this, that once we're all together on the set we are so much in character that we can improvise. The relationships are there.

SS: *How does Mrs. Hudson view Watson?*

RW: I feel it's more companionship with them, because they share an affection for Holmes and, in a sense, they manage him together. She's very fond, I feel, and very friendly with the doctor. She has great respect for him. It's a gentler relationship, but the main thing is that together they share this business of looking after Holmes and seeing that he doesn't go too crazy. (Laughs) Very often my part is no more than a look between the two characters, and that's what they share, really; this man who can be so awful to deal with and at the same time so endearing.

SS: *In recent episodes there have been a few scenes in which Holmes has been particularly insufferable and Mrs. Hudson has been a bit more annoyed than usual.*

RW: I think that has to come from the script. All I can do, really, once I inhabit that character of Mrs. Hudson, is to react to Holmes in whatever way he comes at me. If he comes at me in an insufferable manner, then I react to him as forcibly as I feel she would. It is quite extraordinary how these characters take you over, you know?

It's unbelievable how clever Conan Doyle was, because, as you said, there's very little there in the stories; she's almost a cardboard cutout. And yet in everybody's imagination she's a fully rounded person. People in the streets say "Oh, you're Mrs. Hudson, aren't you?" They know Mrs. Hudson so well.

SS: *It must be very gratifying.*

RW: Well, it's extraordinary to me, how vivid she is in everyone's imagination. Quite amazing. I'm so lucky to be doing it. When they gave me the part they said, "Well, you know, it's not a very rewarding part. You won't have many lines in the script. Are you sure you really want to do it?" I said, "Oh, yes, I'd still like to do it," partly because it was Jeremy who was playing Sherlock. But I have found it to be quite the opposite; I have found it a most rewarding part to play.

SS: *In THE EMPTY HOUSE, you have quite a lot to do. First you're turning the bast of Sherlock Holmes that's shot at by Colonel Sebastian Moran, then you clean house by picking up the bullet—*

RW: That was great fun to do. We always find some little bits of—we call it Jeremy's embroidery—he starts to embroider the script when I'm on and finds things to add which fill out the atmosphere. It's a delight, of course, for me.

SS: *Has there been any difference playing opposite the two Watsons, David Burke and Edward Hardwicke?*

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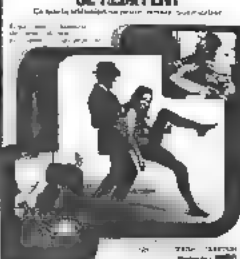
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RW: None at all, I would say, because they are similar actors. They play in a similar style, but once I'm on that set as Mrs. Hudson I just react to whatever character comes on. I really can't say I've made any adjustments between those two.

SS: *We like very much the warmth between Mrs. Hudson and Dr. Watson, and your concern for his welfare. That's been in the series from the very beginning.*

RW: Well, they're my boys, as it were, and I care for them. That may be partly my interpretation, because I am that type of personality myself; I do think I play soft rather than as an old dragon. (Laughs) I wanted her to be real, that's the main thing; I didn't want her to be a cutout figure.

SS: *You mentioned that she's often played with a Scottish accent. We can think of a number of times when she's been played as a cockney.*

RW: I think it becomes a caricature when it's done that way.

SS: *It has a certain music-hall quality.*

RW: Exactly, and it doesn't make a relationship between them so easy. I hope we haven't overstepped the mark in the relationship. Sometimes the director will say, "Oh, no." In one, Jeremy wanted to give me a flower. He gave me a little marigold, just as a little gesture. It was very sweet. It wasn't Conan Doyle; it was just something that happened when we were playing. But it rounds off the character for me.

SS: *Jeremy Paul tried, with his recent script for THE MASTER BLACKMAILER, to give Mrs. Hudson more to do.*

RW: Well, I was lucky, because I didn't know him before. But we had a conversation, rather similar to this, in which I spoke to him about my feelings regarding Mrs. Hudson, and we both felt that it was nice to have the occasional touch of comedy, you know? I like a touch, because there isn't very much comedy in the stories. You don't get many laughs, really. And it was very, very pleasing to have a bit more to do, I have to say.

SS: *That's a two-hour program, isn't it?*

RW: Yes, it is. It was a Christmas special here last year, and it's wonderful in everything. They had a marvelous crew and they



Rosalie Williams as Mrs. Hudson

spent a fortune on it, so it should be a very good one.

SS: *We look forward to it. Jeremy Brett has announced that he intends to complete the entire Sherlock Holmes Canon. Are you ready to go the distance and complete the series with him?*

RW: Oh, God! I said to him on the phone not long ago, I said, "We'll be doing this in our 80s!" (Laughs) But, you know, when the last series came to an end, we thought that was it. Jeremy was very tired, and we all said goodbye, and we couldn't believe that it wasn't going on, really. Then when Jeremy said he would do some more we were so delighted. Absolutely! I will hold myself together. I'm getting older every year, and actually I feel I'm a bit old for Mrs. Hudson, but makeup departments can help. I do wear a very tight corset, of course! (Laughs)

SS: *The last Sherlock Holmes story—not the last written, but the last in terms of when it's supposed to take place—is "His Last Bow," which transpires on the eve of World War One. By that time, Holmes has retired to Sussex; he's keeping bees, and he has a housekeeper identified only as*

Martha. In your view, is that character Mrs. Hudson?

RW: I like to think so. I really do. I don't know whether one could justify it, but I think that he would try to persuade her to go with him.

SS: *In the story, Holmes and Watson are no longer sharing rooms. It seems to us that Sherlock Holmes, who has so few friends, would want to have, if not Watson, certainly Mrs. Hudson, with him.*

RW: Well, I think so. The only thing is, why doesn't he call her, still, Mrs. Hudson? And the other thing is she would have had to leave her establishment in Baker Street. So one could argue for and against, but, at the moment, I feel she would have liked to have gone with him. He would have liked to have her there. But it is only speculation, though, isn't it?

SS: *We'll see what happens when you get around to filming that story.*

RW: Well, I shall be very annoyed if somebody else is there! (Laughs) We'll have to work on Jeremy with that one!

SS: *Have you done any other mystery programs besides Sherlock Holmes?*

RW: I have not. The only other mystery I've done—this goes back to one of my very first jobs in the theatre, when I was about 18—I played in MARIAH MARTIN IN THE RED BARN. Now, you obviously haven't heard of that; it's an old English melodrama. I can't think of any other except OTHELLO; I was strangled in OTHELLO! I have done a lot of American plays. Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams—that's my field, really.

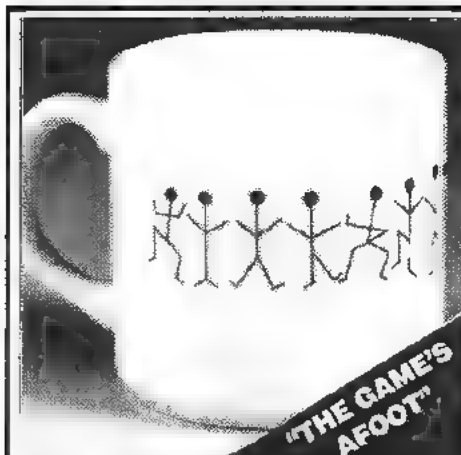
SS: *Well, it's been a pleasure speaking with you. You have a lot of fans here in the United States.*

RW: We had a Sherlock Holmes society from America over here two or three years ago. A party of about 20 fans came over and we had a big do for them at Granada, so maybe you can come over, too.

SS: *We'd love to.*

RW: It's worth thinking about. They were well wine and dined over here! (Laughs)

SS: *We'll hop a plane tomorrow.*



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Meet the Critics

A Reconsideration by Michael Mallory

Probably no individual performances have been so panned over the years by classic-horror-film buffs as Bela Lugosi's unfortunate turn as the Frankenstein Monster in *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*, and Lon Chaney Jr.'s ambitious attempt at the Count in *SON OF DRACULA* (both 1943). Critics, film writers, even devotees of Universal Horror seem to thrive on pointing out time and time again that, though the pictures themselves are worthy, the lead monsters are at best ineffectual. No one can deny that each actor was miscast, but are these performances really as bad as their press indicates? At long last a reevaluation is in order.

Nineteen forty-three was not a banner horror year for Universal Studios. The parade for the most part was passing by, marching to RKO studios under the direction of a brand new drum major named Val Lewton. Soon Universal would drop the ball completely and the one-time horror leader would flounder in a sea of increasingly cheap *Mummy*, *Ape Girl*, and All-Star "HOUSE OF..." Monster Party movies.

Indeed, there is a good case for the claim that *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* and *SON OF DRACULA* are the last fright films of any quality turned out by the studio during its Golden Age. Each picture features a solid supporting cast, solid production values, and excellent musical scores, and each contains individual scenes that rank with the best the studio produced. (The opening grave-robbing scene of *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*, for instance, is one of the creepiest sequences ever put on film; ditto the "Queen Zimba" sequence from *SON OF DRACULA*.) But great horror pictures cannot live by cemetery sets and make-up alone, which brings us back to the question of the lead monsters.

Lugosi and Chaney—two-thirds of the Universal horror triumvirate (the other, of course, being Boris Karloff)—were not the obvious choices for their respective roles as the Monster and Dracula, at least not in purely creative terms. However, in 1943

Lon Chaney's star was firmly in place, and so to him went the horror unit's plum roles. He had already followed Karloff as the Monster and the Mummy (to no great distinction in either case) and had created the doomed lycanthrope Larry Talbot. For an actor whose fame was based more on his name than on his talent, the role of Dracula was destined to be a challenge.



Boogie, boogie, boogie! Bela Lugosi seems to be explaining the Monster's blindness to an unreceptive critical establishment in this production still from FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN (1943).

Bela Lugosi's involvement in *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* came late in the pre-production plans. Originally both title roles were to have been played by Chaney, using trick photography and doubles to pull off the illusion. But, prior to shooting, the Great God Budget demanded a sacrifice, and the obvious victim was Chaney's second role. When last seen on screen (in 1942's *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN*), the Monster (Chaney) had just undergone a brain transplant, with the brain of Ygor (Lugosi) replacing the criminal brain obtained by Fritz in the original *FRANKENSTEIN* (1931). In the final scenes, the Monster spoke in Ygor's voice. Given this set-up (and vital to this is the idea that the Monster in *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* had dialogue—but more about that later), the obvious solution seemed to be bringing Lugosi back as the Monster.

Aside from basic miscasting in *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* and *SON OF DRACULA*, a second strike was called on Chaney and Lugosi in that they

were asked to follow not merely an original performance, but a definitive performance. Even a well-cast actor can blanch under this challenge—Timothy Dalton as James Bond, for instance. To put it into perspective, try to imagine Karloff stepping into the role of Sherlock Holmes, or Basil Rathbone not giving a damn as Rhett Butler in *GONE WITH THE WIND*. (Don't laugh—Rathbone actively campaigned to get the role.) Both actors would have performed to the best of their considerable abilities, and probably would not have disgraced themselves. But the magic that occurs when exactly the right performer takes on exactly the right role would have been nowhere in evidence.

With that in mind, let's take another look at these two long-defamed performances from Universal's Golden Age.

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Dr. Manning (Patric Knowles) prepares the Monster (Bela Lugosi) for the rejuvenation which will restore his strength—and, in the original script, his sight. INSET: A frame blowup from 1943's FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN. The monster sees for the first time since the previous year's GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN, an effective Lugosi moment destroyed in post-production.

To be fair, Bela Lugosi's turn as the Monster has to be considered in a different light than Chaney's Dracula, since Chaney's accomplishment stands on its own, and the performance we see is the performance the actor intended. Lugosi did not fare so well. He was ultimately undermined by editing so severe as to almost be cruel.

In the original screenplay for FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN, the Monster is discovered exactly as last seen in GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN: able to speak but unable to see. Lycanthropic Larry Talbot nurses him throughout, conversing with him, and only at the end of the picture, when charged to full power, is the Monster's vision restored. During the film's shooting, this was exactly how Lugosi played his Monster: groping blindly with arms outstretched, snarling in frustration at things he cannot see, and weak as a mere mortal until his electric boost, at which point he goes on a rampage.

But that is not the picture in its final form. Left on the cutting room floor were all references to the Monster's blindness, as well as his dialogue. These hasty cuts are most evident in the scene in which the Monster finds the hidden journal of Dr. Frankenstein for Talbot in the ruined laboratory. Hasty over-dubbing by Chaney covers the long shots; in close shots Lugosi's lips can actually be seen moving!

What happened? Legend has it that the Hungarian actor's line readings in full Jack Pierce monster makeup brought down the house in the studio screening rooms. Perhaps, but Lugosi's dubbing of Chaney's Monster at the end of GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN provoked no such hilarity. More to the point, if the line readings were no good, why not just re-loop them? Even if a wild line from Chaney had been added to inform us that the Monster could not see, it would have helped. On the other hand, the Monster does seem to be able to get around the rubble of Frankenstein's laboratory quite well for one without vision. Maybe the studio execs felt that the blindness could not logically be sustained given the necessities of staging. Whatever the reason, the removal of this major piece of motivation works to reduce the mighty creature to a shuffling, arm-waving, mouth-flapping automaton.

Added to the actor's problems were physical limitations. Though he was a larger man than Karloff, Bela Lugosi is a frailer Monster, due partially to under-padding and makeup changes giving him a smaller, more angular head. Moreover, at the time of filming, Lugosi was 60 and not at his most robust. (In many scenes, including its release from the iceblock, the Monster is played by stuntman Eddie Parker.)

Given the circumstances, is there anything to redeem Lugosi's performance? I think there is. Admittedly denied the spe-



LEFT: Lon Chaney was a surprisingly effective vampire in *SON OF DRACULA* (1943). **RIGHT:** Count Alucard (Chaney) meets his lady love, Katherine Caldwell (Louise Allbritton), for a night on the swamp.

cial insight that Karloff had for the role, Bela Lugosi played the Monster as a frightened, trapped animal, snarling (convincingly) out of frustration and fear as often as he does out of hate. Also, there is no doubt whatsoever that this poor beast has been stitched together from disparate parts: His limbs move jerkily and out of sync, as if the brain has only limited control over them. This is the same approach that Christopher Lee would employ in his turn as the Monster (or "Creature") in *CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1957). When the Monster has been restored to full strength (and, in the original script, regains his sight), the jerkiness of the limbs ceases and Lugosi plays him with more power and diabolical intelligence.

Once one is aware of the blindness issue, the much-maligned performance of Bela Lugosi becomes quite impressive. Watch as he tries to defend himself from the encroachment of Talbot, Dr.

Mannering (Patric Knowles), and Ilsa Frankenstein (Ilona Massey), raising a log threateningly, trying to follow and pinpoint the voices around him, and starting as Talbot grabs his arm and forces it down. In that one scene alone we see the desperation, fear, and hurt of the pitiable creation.

There are other clever touches in the performance, such as the obvious glee Lugosi shows as his Monster mops up the laboratory floor with the Wolf Man. This Monster is no Karloffian innocent—he is pure evil. He is, in fact, still Ygor. Though he never hid his disdain for the role of Frankenstein's Monster, Bela Lugosi gave it his all, and the abuse his reputation has taken ever since is a true shame.

Lon Chaney's performance as Count "Alucard" in *SON OF DRACULA* is almost always dismissed by a one-liner: Chaney is far

LEFT: It's so difficult for newlyweds to find a double coffin. Pictured: Lon Chaney and Louise Allbritton. **RIGHT:** Thornton Wilder meets Bram Stoker in *OUR TOMB*? No, it's Frank Craven, fresh from playing the Stage Manager in both the stage and film versions of Wilder's *OUR TOWN*, and Lon Chaney as the *SON OF DRACULA*.



Poverty Row Horrors Monogram, PRC and Republic Horror Films of the Forties

Tom Weaver

61 pages, 12 illustrations, Michael Brenas and John Stratus

ISBN 0-891-02-500-5 \$12.95 (hardcover) \$6.95 (paperback)

These 100 horror films were usually inexpensive, some would say cheap, productions, but they were not without their merits. Yet these movies have a huge audience 50 years after their release.

Essays on many of the filmographies in this book. Reviews made by the author studies from 1940-1949. The films are arranged by year of release. Each entry includes the date of release, length, production credits, cast, crew and a short synopsis with critical commentary. Filmographies for prominent horror actors and actresses from John Abbott to George Zucco are provided in the appendix.

Tom Weaver, a prolific horror film writer for publications such as *Lugosi* and *Dracula Lives* in North York, NY, New York.

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too well fed to be convincing as a bloodsucker (no more so, though, than Lugosi in 1948's *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*). This is unfortunate, as the picture boasts not one of the actor's worst performances, but one of his best.

To anyone familiar with Chaney's usual acting style, the very thought of him as Dracula admittedly inspires a horrified reaction. ("Awwwwww, you don't understand; tonight, I'll turn into a bat!") Yet Chaney more than rose to the occasion by underplaying the role with a dignity and restraint that he rarely, if ever, achieved again.

Furthermore, with his grayed hair and moustache, subtle widow's-peak toupee, and elegant evening clothes, Lon Chaney never looked so good. He appears far more suave and romantic than in any of the Inner Sanctum pictures of the same period.

Rather than lurch or hulk, Chaney creeps very effectively, particularly in *Alucard/Dracula's* first scenes, and his voice, normally thick and dull, here takes on shades never heard before. Also, his somewhat stilted way of speaking—something that nearly sinks him as he wrestles with Curt Siodmak's purple dialogue in *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*—works perfectly for Dracula, emphasizing the fact that he is a foreigner.

John Carradine is usually credited with being the first actor to imbue the role of Dracula (in 1944's *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* and 1945's *HOUSE OF DRACULA*) with a sense of the erotic, but that honor should really go to Lon Chaney. For one thing, his is the only Vampire King in films to actually get legally married! More than that, the attraction between Dracula and

Michael Mallory is a Los Angeles based writer specializing in Golden Age Hollywood and animation. His work has appeared in Filmfax, Starlog, and Comic Scene.

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Katherine Caldwell (Louise Allbritton) is evident from the very start, and for once it is understandable. In a superb scene in which Dracula welcomes his bride home, the expression on Chaney's face as he slowly draws her into an embrace clearly indicates that this vampire has more on his mind than dinner!

Chaney's best moments in the picture come in the scene in which he discovers Dr. Brewster (Frank Craven) sneaking around in the basement. We see a Dracula who is perfectly poised and in control, and condescendingly polite. But just under the surface seethes an ocean of menace, which surfaces slightly as the vampire orders Brewster to leave the house and never come back. In this scene, frankly, Chaney acts Craven (renowned as the original Stage Manager in Thornton Wilder's *OUR TOWN*) right off the screen! At times throughout his career Lon Chaney was able to perch a performance on the thin edge of hysteria and play it to great advantage (i.e., his Big Sam in 1958's *THE DEFIANT ONES*), but never before or after was he able to capture the low icy control he displays in *SON OF DRACULA*. Whether it was the input of director Robert Siodmak or Chaney's own inspiration (he was quoted once as saying that Dracula was the most interesting of all the classic monsters), it remains a shame that Chaney never again donned the cape—and an even bigger shame that he has been unfairly panned for a unique one-of-a-kind performance.

With the advent of video (the film writer's best friend!), we no longer have to take the word of past chroniclers and critics as to a film's merits or shortcomings; we can easily see it for ourselves. Whereas this might not radically change the course of monster-movie journalism, it is nice to be able to poke at a wobbly tradition instead of continuing to spread it as blindly as Bela Lugosi's Monster.



Mornings with Peter Cushing

Interview by Richard Valley

When you've read time and time again that a man is kind, charming, and gracious, and then, speaking with him, find the man to be kind, charming, and gracious, you might be hard pressed to find something new to say about him. It's a problem that, over the years, has doubtless challenged anyone wishing to interview Peter Cushing. True, he's been known to roam the countryside driving stakes into the hearts of beautiful young girls, and on more than one occasion he's reanimated a body stitched together from rotting corpses—but what kind, charming, and gracious man doesn't have a few skeletons in the closet? It's just that, unlike Peter Cushing, most don't bring those skeletons back to life!

Recently, *Scarlet Street*'s editor-in-chief had the great pleasure of chatting with the veteran star of stage, screen, and television. (Parking lots, too, but we'll let Mr. Cushing tell you about that.) The phone call took place at 9:30AM Greenwich time, 4:30AM *Scarlet Street* time, and, in an effort to capture as much as possible of the—there's that word again—charm and flavor of the conversation, we've made hardly an editorial change or deletion. So sit back, relax, have a cup of early-morning coffee, and listen in...





LEFT: Louis Hayward (Center) played two roles in 1939's *THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK*. Peter Cushing isn't in this shot because, when Hayward was playing one role, Cushing was playing the other—in footage that wound up on the cutting room floor. **BELOW:** Peter Cushing was one of several undergraduates who had a comic encounter with Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy in 1940's *A CHUMP AT OXFORD*.

PC: That's why I believe so much that happens in life is worked out for us. We go off the track sometimes, but we come back onto the track that's set for us. Of that I'm sure.

RV: What was it like to work with James Whale?

PC: Mind you, I was there in a very, very minor capacity. I had

arrived in Hollywood and, I mean, to get a job right away—it was absolutely amazing! So he could have been like Hitler as far as I was concerned; it didn't matter!

RV: What did you do for Whale?

PC: James Whale was directing Louis Hayward in *THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK*. Hayward was playing twins, a good chap and a bad chap, and Whale wanted an actor who could dress up in the part, learn the lines, and play the scene with Louis—knowing, poor chap, that his lines would end up on the cutting room floor. Of course, it was, for someone who had never been in a film, a wonderful experience.

RV: Was it difficult to adapt your stage technique to film?

PC: You don't give a stage performance on film, you see. That was what I was doing, so Whale very kindly let me go to the rushes each day, and I was able gradually

to cut down what I was doing and watch all the old-timers who were in the film, like Alan Hale and Joseph Schillckraut and Miles Mander. Wonderful cast, and out of the Bible—they did go way, way, way, way back. Whale was enormously kind, as far as I could see. He did have a little eccentricity which would have bothered me greatly had I been a leading player. He would sit with his legs crossed as the scene was going on, and—it's so awfully difficult to explain—the knee that was crossed, he would go up and down with it all the time. (Laughs) Like someone waving at the camera! Not fast, but I began to get hypnotized by it, like a metronome. As none of my scenes really mattered, it wasn't a great problem. I think if I had been Louis Hayward, I'd have said, "Dear Mr. Whale, would you mind keeping still?" (Laughs) I was such an underling; I didn't know the ins or outs of anything, but I certainly enjoyed the work. Would you believe it—\$75 a week, my God!

RV: Really?

PC: Well, I was broke when I arrived, so you can't imagine how delighted I was. Not broke; I had \$15.12 and an Ingersoll watch I left with the YMCA. I said, "Would you accept this as collateral until I get some work? It's a very cheap watch, but it's very reliable."

Peter Cushing: I'm sorry it's such an unearthly hour. What time is it over there?

Richard Valley: Oh, it's 4:30 in the morning.

PC: Pretend you're a silver star. That's about the time we get up to go to work.

RV: At 4:30 in the morning?

PC: Yes, 'round about, not quite so early. Actually, I'm an early bird; I rather like the early morning. I suppose you have to watch certain things that only come on at such unearthly hours in the morning?

RV: This is true, yes.

PC: It's very nice of you to take the trouble. I did enjoy your article with Christopher Lee. Awfully, awfully good, I thought. He's such a dear friend, Christopher. It would be lovely if we could do another picture together. With Vincent, too. I think there's a problem of getting all of us together, now that dear old Johnny Caradine has gone to the great prairie in the sky. We did pretty well with the one we did; what was it called? *HOUSE OF THE LONG SHADOWS*?

RV: Right.

PC: Did you like that?

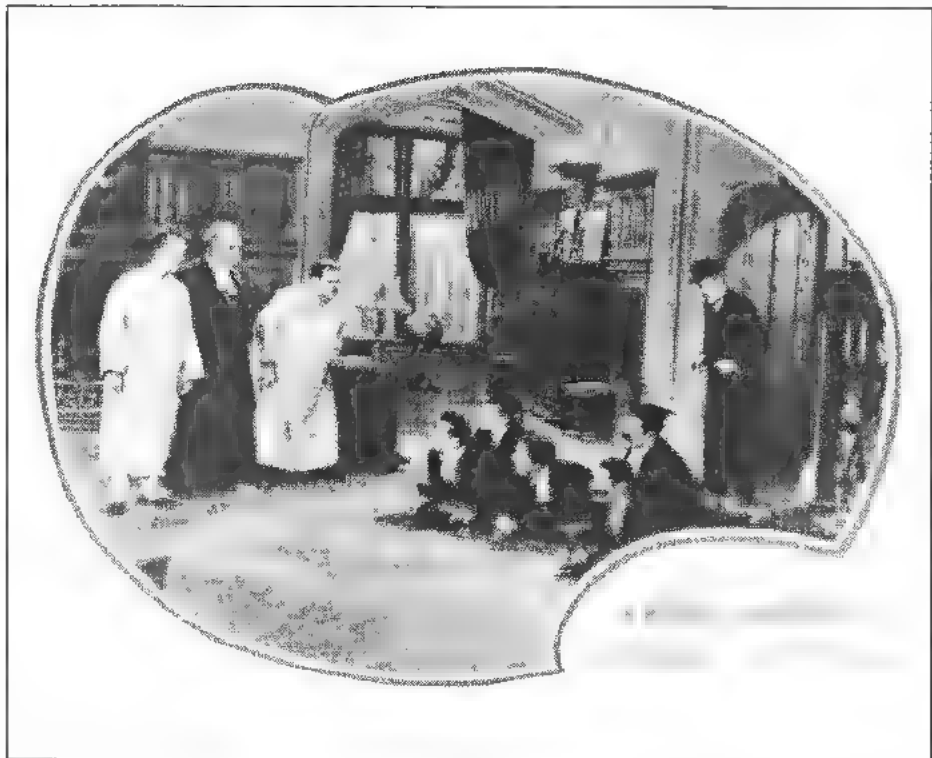
RV: Yes, I did; I enjoyed that. That was based on *SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE*.

PC: Who was in that, way, way, way, way back, when obviously you were a smile in your mother's eyes? (Laughs) I think even I was! I saw it years ago in black and white, and I think it starred Ralph Bellamy.

RV: The 1947 version starred Philip Terry. Now, I know you went to Hollywood in the 30s, but I wasn't aware that you had worked with James Whale, who directed Universal's *FRANKENSTEIN*...

PC: Oh, yes, yes; that was an extraordinary coincidence, in a way. My favorite play of all time, which I've never been able to do, is *JOURNEY'S END*. He and Colin Clive made an enormous success of that on the stage over here, way, way back, and went over to Hollywood to make the film of it, and from that stemmed *FRANKENSTEIN*. It's quite extraordinary that I should go out there, and I should arrive in Hollywood and within 10 days work with James Whale. It's quite extraordinary.

RV: It's amazing.





LEFT: As Osric, Peter Cushing made quite a favorable impression on Laurence Olivier, filmdom's first HAMLET. **BELOW:** Something is rotten in Denmark, but it isn't the acting. Osric (Peter Cushing) cradles the dying Laertes (Terrence Morgan) under the watchful gaze of Hamlet (Laurence Olivier).

RV: And within 10 days...

PC: Yes, yes, which was absolutely wonderful. I've been back to Hollywood many times since, but it's changed beyond recognition. I think I was awfully lucky to be in Hollywood at the time when it was right at its peak.

RV: In the late 30s...

PC: And then, of course, war broke out. I didn't want to come back and kill anyone—or get killed myself, come to that—but I did get terribly homesick. I wanted to get home. Even if you had the money, you couldn't get a ticket for a train or a plane or a ship, because they were all comman-

deered for the war effort. I had to work my way back. It took 18 months to get home from Hollywood to Liverpool—doing all sorts of things. Dear old Louis Hayward very kindly paid my fare to New York, and the first thing I saw when I arrived in New York was a sign over a hospital saying, "Give Blood for Christmas." So I thought, "That's all I've got to give at the moment," and I popped in, gave them a pint, walked out and fell flat on my face on the sidewalk, and had to be carted back and have two pints shoved back into me! My war effort wasn't very successful. (Laughs) I did all sorts of jobs. I became a car parker in Brooklyn, in Coney Island.

RV: In Brooklyn?!

PC: The chap who owned the car park looked exactly like Edward G. Robinson playing a gangster! (Laughs) I lasted exactly two hours on that job, because I was very careful. The owners used to drive up to the entrance, leave their cars with the engine ticking over, and I'd take over. "Edward G. Robinson" suddenly poked his head out and said, "What the hell are you doing? There's a queue stretching back to Brooklyn Bridge!" I said, "Dear fellow, I don't like to scratch the paint off people's cars. I have a certain respect for other people's property." And he said, "Well, you're fired!" And that was that!

(Laughs) He gave me a couple of dollars, bless his heart. I got up eventually to Canada, to Montreal. There was a little film company up there. They were doing some special-effects work for a film called—**THE 29TH PARALLEL**, would it be?

RV: **THE 49TH PARALLEL.**

PC: They wanted about 30 swastika flags and 30 Japanese flags for a little matte sort of thing that they wanted in the film. So I went to the art department and got this job. I hadn't any money, so I became the night porter at the YMCA, and I did the flags during the day. Well, I had done all these little swastikas and Japanese flags, and left them drying, and went out to get lunch. Came back, and two whacking great monkeys, police, grabbed me and lifted me and carried me off to headquarters. I'd apparently been reported as a spy by a very suspicious Irish maid, who had been in my room and had seen all these things! Anyway, I eventually got home.

RV: After a lot of adventures...

PC: Yes, quite a lot, quite a lot. I was also an usher in a cinema, Loew's State Cinema in Montreal. They gave me a uniform that was obviously made for a girl. It didn't fit anywhere. The flies wouldn't go up, so I held the torch there, which was an unfortunate thing to do! I lasted in that job for a fortnight, so that wasn't bad.



RV: Better than parking cars. It must have been dangerous, at that time, to cross over to England.

PC: It was a bit iffy, because I took the place of a deserter on a banana boat, which was part of a 50-strong convoy sailing from Halifax. You went at the fastest speed of the slowest boat, you see. That was in 1942, in February.

RV: And once you were back in England, what did you do?

PC: Ah! Good question! (Laughs) I absolutely adore rugby; you know, the English game of rugby football?

RV: Yes.

PC: I used to play for school and I had two rather bad injuries, so those kept me out of the armed forces. And that didn't worry me a bit, because I'm not a fighter. I would have hated it, but naturally one wanted to do what one could! So I joined an organization called Entertainment National Services Association—ENSA, which the troops immediately changed to Every Night Something Awful!

RV: They didn't!

PC: (Laughs) I'm glad to say that the piece I chose they did like, because it was *PRIVATE LIVES* by Noel Coward. Of course, the most lovely thing of all was that, when I joined, I played with Sonja Blashaw, who had been in it for almost two years and was absolutely exhausted and had to be replaced. And the dear lady who took her place became my beloved wife, which was the greatest thing that has ever happened to me. If it hadn't been for Helen, you certainly wouldn't be bothering to talk to me today!

RV: Really?

PC: Oh, she was wonderful. Absolutely wonderful.

RV: Was *PRIVATE LIVES* the only time that you acted together?

PC: Yes. As soon as we met we knew—well, it was just one of those things. It wasn't a physical thing so much as this enormous attraction, and we just wanted to be together from there on in, you know? Just a wonderful companionship, which is really very rare. So we had a long chat. We knew that if we both remained in the profession, there would be ever so many times that we would be separated. So she decided, "You be the breadwinner, and I'll help you along the way." Which she certainly did! In fact, she said, "You really shouldn't be an actor. You've got a great deal of talent and you've got certain looks, but you're as nervous as a racehorse; you don't like people watching you work. You're terribly shy, terribly shy! Let's put those things right first, shall we?" Which she set about doing. She was a wonderful partner, because she was also my greatest critic. And that is awfully important for anyone in our business, you know? You can't have people saying, "Aren't you wonderful!" all the time because, if you're

not careful, you begin to think you are when you jolly well ain't, you know?

RV: (Laughs) It's good to have someone who can really be honest with you. Was it about this time that you began working with Laurence Olivier?

PC: That came very soon after the end of the war. Laurence Olivier made the film of *HAMLET* and—am I going on too much, or would you like me to tell you the whole story of how I came to meet him?

RV: Oh! Tell me the whole story!

PC: He was doing a play by Garson Kanin, called *BORN YESTERDAY*. Lovely play! He was producing it over here and asked me to audition for the part that Bill Holden played in the film. Again, I was broke. (Laughs) Put that down! Perpetually broke! Broke, broke, broke all the time; even playing Monopoly! Coming home on the boat from America, I was always being sent to jail and never picking up 200 quid!

RV: (Laughs) So, you were...

PC: Broke, all the time! So here I was, broke again—underline broke—being interviewed by Laurence Olivier. He said, "Can you speak with an American accent?" And I said, "No, sir." And he said, "But you've been to America?" I said, "I've been to Glasgow, but I can't speak Scot!" (Laughs) And he said, "Oh, well, that's very honest of you. You haven't wasted my time or yours. I shall remember you." And I went out into the cold of Charing Cross Road. Sure enough, about a month or so later, his right-hand man—an awfully sweet man called Anthony Bushell—rang me up and said, "Look, dear boy, we're making a film of *HAMLET*; do you think you could do something in that?" I said, "Well, is *Hamlet* cast?" And he said, "Yes, you fool! Laurence Olivier is playing it!" (Laughs)

RV: He must have thought you were being just a wee bit presumptuous.

PC: Fools running in where angels fear tread! They've got nothing on me! So he said, "Look here, the part is *Ostie*." And that's how I came to be associated with dear Larry. I played *Ostie* in the film and it was frightfully successful, and while we were working on it, Larry came into the makeup room and said, "Peter, I'm taking an Old Vic company to Australia for the year. Would you like to come with us?" And I said, "I would love to, dear boy, but I wouldn't want to go anywhere without my dear wife, Helen." He said, "She shall come with us. I'm not going to have any more people parted. We had enough of that in the war." We took three plays: *RICHARD III*, in which I played Clarence, Richard's brother; *SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL*, in which I played Joseph Surface; and the other one was Thornton Wilder's...

RV: *THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH*?

PC: Well done! How did you know that?

RV: It was a guess.

PC: You're having me on! You know more than I'm telling you! (Laughs)

RV: No, no! It had to be either *OUR TOWN* or *THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH*.

PC: That's really very good, because it's now about five o'clock in the morning, isn't it?

RV: Yes, it is.

PC: Got the coffee on?

RV: I have a cup right in front of me.

PC: Good lad! So those were the three plays we did. Then we came back to London and repeated that series for the Old Vic in London. Which lasted again for six months.

RV: So that was a long stretch of work.

PC: It was, indeed! I was able to pay up a few of my debts, but I was still broke! (Laughs) You don't get a great deal of money working for the Old Vic. But it was a wonderful experience, you know? I keep on about money, which is the wrong thing to say, 'cause money does not bring happiness. I never wanted to have thousands or millions, but I wanted to be able to buy my dear wife a little present for Christmas occasionally! And that didn't come until many, many, many years later, when I got into pictures.

RV: Before that, you were quite a staple of British television, weren't you?

PC: (Coughs) I'm so sorry. I've got an awful cold and I'm sorry to cough down the line at you.

RV: Oh, that's quite all right.

PC: Will you excuse me a moment while I have a good cough?

RV: Certainly.

PC: I'll put my hand over the receiver.

RV: Okay.

PC: So sorry about that. I'm what is called "confined to barracks." I've caught some sort of chill. It's very unusual for me to have a cold, but there are about six viruses going around and one of them got attracted to me. Now, where were we, dear boy? Where were we before I had to spit?

RV: Well, before you had to spit...

PC: If you put that in I'll sue you!

RV: It's out! It's out!

PC: Good lad! (Laughs)

RV: You were about to go into television.

PC: Ah, that's right; yes, yes, yes. I said, "Look, darling, I think I'd better go back into repertory"—which is our equivalent of your summer stock. And Helen said, "You will do no such thing. Repertory's marvelous, but for you it is a retrograde step. We've got to go forward!" So she got her little copy of the *Radio Times*, which lists the plays on television and on the wireless. She picked out the names of all the producers and wrote a letter saying, "Mr. Cushing finds himself unexpectedly unemployed and would like to be used." Or words to that effect. No, really, she wrote a very, very good letter, and I said, "Oh, darling, I don't really like to do this; no one knows me." And she said, "You'll be surprised." By return came a letter from



These two photos courtesy of Deborah Del Vecchio

Television beckoned in the 50s. Two of the many roles that made Peter Cushing one of England's household names were Richard II in *RICHARD OF BORDEAUX* (LEFT, with Jeannette Sterke) and Andrew Crocker-Harris in *THE BROWNING VERSION* (RIGHT, with Joyce Heron).

a producer of BBC television, saying "How delighted I am to hear from you, Mr. Cushing. Enjoyed your work in the theatre so very, very much over the years. Would you consider..." "Would you consider!" (Laughs)

RV: What was it like to appear on television in the 50s?

PC: In those days, everything was done live. You rehearsed for three weeks, which was about the same time allowed for a play in the theatre. You gave one performance on the Sunday night, which was put aside for drama, and then three days later—imagine the torture, dear boy—three days later you did the play again, laughingly called live. As if everything that had happened in those three days—oh, it was awful; it really was! And I went on doing that for 10 years. That is why I'm the nervous wreck that I am today! (Laughs) But it certainly put my name before the British public. I became so frightfully well-known that I couldn't walk down the street without having to sign something—even a banana skin once, I had to sign.

RV: A banana skin?

PC: Not the pithy side; the other side. Imagine the history of that banana; I wonder what on earth they've done with it, anyway!

RV: I'm sure it's in someone's collection.

PC: I got so nervous on the first show I did. There was a clock in the studio, and suddenly it hit 8 o'clock, and it said "Sound and vision on." And I felt as though I'd walked into a plank—"plink," like that, on my forehead. I went through the whole play absolutely *not* knowing what I was saying, what I was doing, and thinking, "Alright, after this I shall commit suicide, because no one will want me." Went home feeling utterly depressed, and in those days we had makeup that made you look like an

orange. I was sitting on what we call tube trains; what do you call them?

RV: The subway?

PC: I was sitting on our equivalent of the subway and a chap leaned over and said, "Are you all right?" And I said, "Well, I feel a bit sick." And he said, "Oh, I bet you've got jaundice; you look like it." (Laughs) Anyway, I got home. I was so depressed, and as I rang the bell at our flat I heard—no, I beg your pardon, I went into the flat because—we were broke, have you got that? We were broke...

RV: Got it! (Laughs)

PC: ...and you may print the spit if you want!

RV: Okay! (Laughs)

PC: Anyway, we were broke and we had no television. Helen had gone to some friends who *had* a television, to watch the play I was in, so I was in before her. I sat before the fire, and I heard her footsteps tripping along—you can hear in the way someone walks, in what mood they are, can't you sometimes?—and I thought, "Ooh, she sounds very happy." I thought she'd come in saying, "How am I going to pull the boy out of this one?" And she said, "Dear Peter, that was the most marvelous performance I've ever seen! I think you must be a secret drinker, because when you played that drunk scene, I was convinced you were half seized over." So I suppose up comes the old adage. Some nights you think, "Well, I was not too bad tonight," and 'round come your friends who say, "What on earth was the matter with you tonight? You were quite dreadful, dear boy!" And the next night you feel that you were giving the most awful performance, and they come 'round and say, "Gosh, old chap, wish I could do that!" (Laughs) That's why films are a little less painful, because you can go to the rushes and see if you're getting halfway near your intentions.

RV: Then you can do a retake...

PC: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes! To me film acting is a very instinctive and spontaneous medium; if everything is right on the first take—for the cameras, sound, and the actor—that's the one to use. Unless you're doing some vast thing like *BEN HUR* or *EARTHQUAKE*, I honestly don't think going up to take 50 is really necessary. In nearly all the films I've done it's take one and usually take another one, and that's all the takes you need. It's such an instinctive and—what's the word I used?

RV: Spontaneous

PC: That's the word, clever boy! Just testing, just testing. Making sure you were still with me.

RV: There are many horror stories about things going wrong on live TV...

PC: I only dried twice. In rehearsal, you had a girl who was the assistant floor manager. She would watch the rehearsals like an eagle and make a note where any pauses came, so that during the actual performance, if there came any pause that hadn't been in the rehearsal, she would know the actor had dried. She would push a button that would cut the sound, throw the line to the actor, and then release her finger from the button, and the actor would carry on. The whole process took a very few seconds, but for the poor actor it felt like a year! Standing there, trying to look relaxed and smiling as if nothing's happened—smiling like an obedient dog, you know?

RV: Yes!

PC: And what happens if the scene doesn't call for a smile? (Laughs) Anyhow, it only happened twice, and even darling Helen, who knew me backwards, said, "You didn't dry, did you?" And I said,

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The Mystery of the Cushing Tapes

investigated by David Stuart Davies

In 1964 the BBC produced a television series called DETECTIVES. Each episode featured a different sleuth, and the programs were, in essence, a collection of pilots. Among the detectives featured were Dr. Thorndyke, Albert Campion, Gervase Fenn, and Sherlock Holmes. Although the Thorndyke episode did eventually spawn a series, it excited little interest and was soon forgotten.

However, the episode that really grabbed the viewers' attention and acceptance was the Sherlock Holmes segment: THE SPECKLED BAND. Holmes was played by Douglas Wilmer, and Watson by Nigel Stock, who began here a lengthy career as the detective's biographer. Wilmer, looking not unlike a jowly Basil Rathbone, was an excellent, sardonic Holmes; Stock was a solid, dependable Watson—though he was, at times, unwisely encouraged to play for laughs.

The success of this particular program prompted a full-blown series in 1966, shown on Saturday nights. (Wilmer was convinced that half the population would be out on the town enjoying themselves—however, it was a great hit.) The series featured THE ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT, THE DEVIL'S FOOT, THE COPPER BEECHES, THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE, THE ABBEY GRANGE, THE SIX NAPOLEONS, THE MAN WITH THE TWISTED LIP, THE BERYL CORONET, THE BRUCE-PARTINGTON PLANS, CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON, THE RETIRED COLOURMAN, and LADY FRANCES CARFAX.

In recent years, Wilmer has overcome his reticence to express his thoughts about the series:

...a lot of the scripts were very ragged. There was one script, for THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE, which was given to me only 10 days before we were due to start rehearsing it. When I read the script I couldn't believe my eyes. There were 14 characters, all of them seeming to have been introduced by Damon Runyon and not mentioned in the Canon at all. The story started in a mews flat with the banker, Merryweather, in bed with his mistress. The script called for saucy pictures on the walls, and a sort of comic act with policemen climbing in and out of windows. The producer admitted he was a little worried about that one! I informed him that the script had gone straight into the waste paper bin, as I was not doing it. I suggested that the script editor should simply take a slice of the original text, lift out the required dialogue, and there would be a script. And that is what they did.

It was perhaps no wonder that Wilmer refused to take part in a second series of this surprise hit. However, it was not just the quality of the scripts that bothered him, but also the reduced rehearsal time: "The BBC said they had to economize and we could not have a fortnight but only 10 days to work on each story. I said I could not do the episodes in that time scale."

It was at this point that Peter Cushing was approached to play Holmes. His love of the character and the opportunity to return to television (where he found his first major successes in the early 50s) prompted his acceptance. There was to be the added bonus of a two-part adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, actually filmed on Dartmoor. Cushing, naively as it turned out, accepted the 10-day production turnaround time:

I said 10 days is enough provided I get the scripts beforehand, because I never go into anything unless I know it backwards. I need a very strong knowledge of what I'm going to say even before the first rehearsal. However, for each of the 16 episodes there were to be filmed inserts and they hadn't made allowances for the British weather! So we got behind, and by the time we were half the way through shooting the series it had begun to be shown on the television. As a result, toward the end we were doing them in three days! When I saw some of them, they upset me terribly. It wasn't Peter Cushing doing his best as

Sherlock Holmes—it was Peter Cushing looking relieved he had remembered what to say and said it.

Problems were exacerbated as this series, unlike the previous one, was shot in color. Later, when Wilmer and Cushing worked together on Hammer's *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* (1970), they discussed the series, and Cushing admitted to his fellow Holmes that he would rather earn his living sweeping Calcutta station than go through the experience again.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S SHERLOCK HOLMES was certainly not a comfortable experience for Cushing and his fellow actors, and some of that unease and lack of preparation time transmitted itself onto the screen. This was never more evident than when Stock fluffed his lines while shooting. He stopped, smiled, said his line again and carried on, expecting the mistake to be edited out. It wasn't. On transmission the fluffed line and its repeat remained. In those days the shows, despite being shot on video, were acted as though the program were going out live, the



Peter Cushing as Sherlock Holmes



LEFT: Douglas Wilmer and Nigel Stock were Holmes and Watson in the first set of BBC adaptations. **BELOW:** The following year, Peter Cushing took over as Holmes for the unhappy Wilmer. Nigel Stock continued as Watson.

debonair, eccentric, and uncannily observant friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes.

Cushing threw himself into the project with great enthusiasm, attending meetings, making suggestions, and thoroughly researching the character. It was he who made the request that in each story the characters dress according to the relative Paget drawings. In doing so, Cushing claimed, they exploded the myth of Holmes' Inverness cape: "It's not an Inverness cape in the drawings, it's a long overcoat with a hood and we had one made to match the illustrations exactly."

The colors of the dressing gowns as described in the stories were carefully copied: the plum, the grey, and the famous mouse-colored one. Holmes' pipes were meticulously catalogued and made by the renowned pipemakers Charatara in Jermyn Street, London.

Cushing recalls that all this authenticity did not please some viewers:

The very first story to be shown was *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*, in which Holmes was dressed nearly all the time in the conventional style of the period, which was frock coat and top hat. Letters poured into the BBC saying "Why are you dressing Holmes and Watson like two undertakers?" You see, Holmes only wore his deerstalker when he was off in the country or when he came from the country and was crossing from Victoria or whichever station to Baker Street.

It becomes quite obvious from these comments and from the programs themselves, which used real stately homes as locations, that this series was very much the forerunner of the Granada films, and in many ways the precursor for the glory that was to come.

The Cushing series was repeated on British screens in the summer of 1969, and then it disappeared without trace. In the 70s, the story given out by the BBC was that the videotapes had been wiped. The reason given for this act of sacrilege was that it was carried out on the instructions of the Doyle estate because the broadcast rights had expired. This subsequently proved to be un-

action being continuous; the only pauses occurred when a filmed section was to be inserted. On the production of *THE BOSCOMBE VALLEY MYSTERY*, for example, the cast spent just two days in the studio and, after technical and lighting rehearsals, the show was shot in two and a half hours, with just five pauses!

The Cushing series, picking up what gems were left from the Canon after the Wilmer episodes, contained the following collection of cases: *THE SECOND STAIN*, *A STUDY IN SCARLET*, *THE DANCING MEN*, *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*, *THE BOSCOMBE VALLEY MYSTERY*, *THE GREEK INTERPRETER*, *THE NAVAL TREATY*, *THOR BRIDGE*, *THE MUSGRAVE RITUAL*, *BLACK PETER*, *WISTERIA LODGE*, *SHOSCOMBE OLD PLACE*, *THE SOLITARY CYCLIST*, *THE SIGN OF FOUR*, and *THE BLUE CARBUNCLE*. (Apart from *BLACK PETER* and *A STUDY IN SCARLET*, all have subsequently been filmed by Granada.)

The scripts, in general, were fairly faithful to the original stories, but occasionally writers would alter events or dialogue for no apparent reason—just for the hell of it, maybe. The programs were not picked up for showing in the States because they were considered to be too violent. By today's standards this view is laughable, but at the time the BBC was clear that the emphasis in the series was on the darker side of the cases:

What is new in this series is the basic approach—a daring realization of the lurking horror and callous savagery of Victorian crime. Here is the re-creation of the Victorian half-world of brutal males and the furtive innocents they dominate; of evil hearted servants scheming and embracing below stairs; of murder, mayhem, and the macabre as the hansom cab once more sets out with Dr. Watson and his

David Stuart Davies is the author of Holmes of the Movies, Sherlock Holmes and the Hentzau Affair, Fixed Point: The Life and Death of Sherlock Holmes, and Sherlock Holmes through the Magnifying Glass. He is co-president of The Northern Musgraves of Sherlock Holmes Society.



true. The more likely reason (if the tapes have been erased, because that's not certain) is that they fell foul of those short-sighted, corporation "dolt-heads" who destroyed many classic video programs from the 50s and 60s by wiping hundreds of tapes. The reason? To provide more space in the video vaults!

All was quiet until September 1982, when *Cinefantastique* ran a fascinating article by Bill Kelley, recording the efforts to locate these tapes by Stirling Smith, who was then (and maybe still is) chief operating officer for Filmcorp Sales, a Los Angeles based US/Canada distribution company. After seeing a copy of *THE BLUE CARBUNCLE*, Smith came to believe that the tapes existed and "unquestionably have commercial value." He wanted their release to American network television and video cassette. Smith received Dame Jean Conan Doyle's blessing to pursue the venture and even got Cushing to agree to appear as Holmes in new segments introducing the cases. "He would play Sherlock Holmes retired and elderly, tending bees, introducing each story and reminiscing about his youth."

Eventually, after bombarding the BBC with requests, letters, demands even, Smith received a cryptic Telex saying, in effect, that even if the tapes do exist, and frankly some of them do, the BBC cannot offer them—and that's all we have to say.

There is no known reason why the tapes cannot be released for commercial sale. Many of the old BBC programs—some older than the Cushing/Holmes ones—are finding their way onto shelves in the local video store. This part of the case still remains a mystery.

However, I do know that some of the programs still exist in the BBC archives. Sadly, one must assume that, of the 15 episodes, 10 have been wiped, but *A STUDY IN SCARLET*, *THE SIGN OF FOUR*, *THE BOSCOMBE VALLEY MYSTERY*, *THE BLUE CARBUNCLE*, and *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*—both episodes—are still intact. I know because I've seen 'em! (All, that is, with the exception of *A STUDY IN SCARLET*, which remains on the original one-inch video tape; still, it's there.) Having a friendly "mole" in BBC television has helped tremendously in obtaining copies of those programs and has allowed me to assess them anew. Of course, technology and indeed acting styles have changed, moved on, and developed since 1968—after all, it is almost a quarter of a century since these programs were made—so one must view them with that in mind. With certain reservations, I can say that the episodes emerge as fascinating and effective. However, the quality of the actions and scripts varies from the splendid to the awful.

Let's investigate!

Turn on that video viewer in your mind and enjoy.

The screen is dark. The title *SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S SHERLOCK HOLMES* appears as stirring, rather overly dramatic, music swells. We see Cushing profiled in silhouette and then full face as he steps into the light and opens a French window, peering into the far distance. An oil lamp crashes to the floor, the flames billowing as the music rises and the remainder of the credits roll. Nigel Stock looking, or trying to look, intuitive as he examines an Oriental dagger; then various objets d'art from Holmes' life flash on the screen: a knuckle duster, chemicals bubbling in test tubes, etc. Then the program begins. . .

The Sign of four

This is the worst of the programs I have viewed. The complex story is rushed and, as a result, the threat of Small and Tonga (played by Howard Goorney and Zen Keller, the latter on screen for only 30 seconds) and the importance of the treasure is trivialized. The river chase is without an ounce of drama or tension. This is strange, as the script was penned by Michael and

Mollie Hardwicke, who were veterans in adapting Holmes tales, especially for radio. The disappointment increases when, apart from the Sholto apartment—"an oasis of art in the howling desert of South London"—there is no sense of India in the program. Holmes' scuffling disguise is dropped, and with it Athelney Jones' (John Straton) line about the detective's acting ability: "You would have made an actor, and a rare one." In place of these sad omissions are two protracted comedy scenes, both featuring Watson. One deals with the good doctor having to continuously replenish Athelney Jones' brandy while they wait for Holmes to return. "It is hot in here," says the inspector, eyeing the decanter greedily. The other scene is far more embarrassing. Watson turns up at Mrs. Forrester's (Ailsa Grahame) with the treasure box to find Thaddeus Sholto (Paul Daneman) is also there: He's been released by the police and it appears that, like Watson, he's taken a fancy to Mary Morstan (Ann Bell). For some time they fawn over her while she simpers; then they open the box to find it empty, enabling Watson to utter his sixth "Great Heavens" of the program.

This episode came late in the series, and one can see evidence of the rushed shooting. Lines are fluffed and the photography is atrocious: The camera jerks unexpectedly from one side of the set to another without ease or, at times, apparent reason. On the positive side, the highlights are Cushing's smooth playing and the masterly final scene. The gas jet is low in the Baker Street rooms; the case now over, Holmes is smoking a quiet pipe while Watson explains that Miss Morstan didn't mind that there was no treasure after all. Then the conversation takes on a philosophical tone:

Watson: You don't ask much of life, do you, Holmes?

Holmes: Work, my dear Watson. A problem to solve is all I ask. I cannot live without brainwork. Give me the pleasure of finding a field for my own peculiar powers. Give me work. This is my reward and I am content.

Cushing's delivery is superb. This is not a tirade, an explosion of irritation; it is said quietly, gently even, but with real conviction. It is a lovely moment.

The Boscombe Valley Mystery

This is an altogether finer program, much more assured in its approach and development. The camerawork, performances, and, above all, the script are vastly superior to those in *THE SIGN OF FOUR*. The script follows very closely the contours of the original. The scene of McCarthy's (Peter Madden) death is very gory—his face drenched in blood as he utters the strange reference to "a rat"—and is repeated several times throughout the program to great effect. Cushing is excellent, looking splendid in his deerstalker and traveling cloak. However, again there are unnecessary comic touches, such as the scene in which a fat man (Gertan Klauber) carrying an enormous plant enters the railway carriage, intruding upon Holmes and Watson's privacy. Eventually Holmes is able to get rid of the fellow by means of a few deductions:

Holmes: I am aware, sir, that you are a tobacco merchant from Bristol, a secret drinker and at one time of your life you spent some time at sea—but why, oh, why do you try to conceal the fact that you are a profound admirer of Miss Marie Corelli?

Holmes lifts the man's paper to reveal one of her books. The tobacco merchant flees to the restaurant car in embarrassment, taking his large plant with him, leaving the two friends in peace again.

The scene wherein Holmes examines the ground at the Boscombe pool, shot on film, is pure animated Paget and a delight to watch, with Cushing crawling about, magnifying glass in hand, scooping cigar ash into an envelope and handing Watson a large rock, saying, "Be careful with that; it's the murder weapon."

The moment in the story that has John Turner (John Tate) recounting his exploits as Black Jack of Ballarat is dramatic and gripping. It is done with a minimum of fuss, using sound effects and sketches of Australian life, and is, in essence, more effective than the recent Granada version.

Strangely, Inspector Lestrade (a small part here, played by Michael Godfrey) becomes Inspector Lanner. Perhaps the usual Lestrade in the series, actor William Lucas, was not available for this program, or it was felt that the brevity of the part did not warrant his involvement. Stock as Watson continues to be an irritation with his mugging and overreactions, but overall this is good Sherlockian television.

The Hound of the Baskervilles

This, my friends, is the piece de resistance. Quite honestly, it is a small masterpiece. The script was crafted by playwright Hugh Leonard, who wisely let the Doyle text have its head. As a result, it is the most faithful screen adaptation of the story I know. All the famous lines are in place, and the mood of menace and supernatural threat missing from the Granada version is beautifully conveyed.

A brief precredit sequence tells, with great economy, the Legend of the Hound. Then we witness a dinner party given by Sir Charles Baskerville (Ballard Berkeley), who, gazing at a painting of the ferocious hound attacking his ancestor Hugo (Gerald Flood), tells of his belief in the phantom beast: "I will not walk upon the moor at night." His guests—Stapleton (Philip Bond), Squire Frankland (George Howe), and Doctor Mortimer (David Leland)—scoff at their host's fears and take their leave, laughing into the dark Dartmoor night. At this point, Sir Charles retrieves a

note from his smoking-jacket pocket asking him to meet Laura Lyons (Penelope Lee) at the moor gate. He throws it on the fire and keeps the appointment.

The air is still and silent. Sir Charles lights a cigar. After a moment, there is a rustling sound, then a faint growling, and finally a chilling howl. Sir Charles races down the yew alley toward the house, the fear of the devil on his face. The howl is heard again, and the poor knight clutches his heart and falls dead to the ground.

The story then follows the route of the original, with Cushing in sparkling form, conveying almost as much by his expressions as by his crisp utterances. This Holmes is less tetchy, less strident than the Cushing Holmes of the Hammer film version of 1958, and this benefits the production.

There is a lovely, sly touch when Sir Henry (Gary Raymond) enters Baskerville Hall for the first time and views the large staircase with its impressive stained-glass window, which bears the motto of the Baskerville family: CAVE CANEM NOCT. Translated as "Beware the dog in the night time," this is a wonderfully witty idea, in a sense combining the two Dartmoor cases: *The Hound* and *Silver Blaze*, in which the famous reference to the dog in the night time occurs.

This version of the Baskerville case is not without its faults—the hound, as always, is a big disappointment, there is no Lestrade at the end and no final Baker Street scene—but no dramatization of this tale can be perfect. It remains, however, a little gem, and it is a dreadful shame that this program is not available on video for all to see.

Continued on page 100



In 1968, Peter Cushing starred for the second time in *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*. It was the first *HOUND* to actually be filmed on location in Devon.

All photos courtesy David Stuart Davies

Christopher Lee



enters the House of Hammer

It was exactly one year ago, in *Scarlet Street's* Fall 1991 issue, that we ran our first interview with the great Christopher Lee. Much of that first feature was devoted to the actor's recent filming of two four-hour mini-series, **SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE LEADING LADY** and **SHERLOCK HOLMES: INCIDENT AT VICTORIA FALLS**. This time, in an interview conducted for Cinemax and printed with their kind permission, Christopher Lee reminisces about his days (and nights!) playing such immortal characters as Count Dracula, Kharis the Mummy, and *Frankenstein's Creature*, for the grand, Gothic studio that was Hammer...



Makeup artist Phil Leakey was the true creator of the Creature (Christopher Lee) for 1957's *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, the film that put Hammer on the map.

CineMAX: How did you get cast in *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*?

Christopher Lee: By sheer chance, as a matter of fact. It was in 1956/57, and I'd been an actor since 1947. For the first 10 years of my career, I'd been told that I was far too tall to be an actor, and I looked too foreign because of the Italian blood on my mother's side. Neither of these excuses were very valid. You are either born with the ability and the inventiveness and the instincts of an actor, or you aren't. The rest is technique. So all of a sudden I'm asked to play someone who doesn't speak, and the taller the better. I don't really know how it happened. I think Terence Fisher, who was the director for most of those films for Hammer, is credited for having said it was the way I walked. I'm not quite sure whether that's true or not. I'm not sure what bearing it has on it, either, but I think it was the fact that I was tall, that I'd done a lot of mime, and that I obviously had experience working in all the different countries in Europe.

MAX: How would you describe the character of Frankenstein's Creature?

CL: A child. I had seen Boris Karloff's performance in the three Frankenstein films that he did. I thought it was one of the most brilliant pieces of acting I've ever seen, and I still think so. The one preeminent quality in his performance was this childlike quality and the loneliness, the sadness of an unwanted being. I've always tried to put an element of sadness and loneliness into every one of those characters, because it's unconventional. It's unexpected and, if you get the sympathy of the audience, it creates a far greater impact when you do something that could be construed as destructive or wicked. They say, "Poor thing, he didn't really mean to do it. He had no choice." I played the Crea-

ture—so far as I could imagine this—as a being put together, literally, from pieces of other people. With a damaged brain. I tried to play the character like an ill-coordinated, childish creature who had no control over his emotions. We weren't allowed to copy the makeup, of course, because that was copyright Universal Films. So we could not use the Karloff makeup, which is just as well because mine was bad enough. Some critic said that I looked like a road accident.

MAX: Tell us about the makeup.

CL: Well, I did three tests, if I remember rightly, for the character. They were quite dreadful. I mean, one of them made me look like a combination between a wolf and a pig. Another was, surprisingly, quite close to the Elephant Man. And then we put our heads together and said, "Look, it's bits and pieces of other people, so it should be patched together." So there were lumps and scars and one dead eye and the stitch marks and everything, which was pretty unpleasant. Today it would be considerably easier, because makeup has obviously improved, but it took about three to four hours every day. It didn't take very long to take it off—with Boris it took about two hours—and I didn't have to wear the terribly heavy

things he had to wear. The only disagreeable aspect was when I had to get into this tank, because the Creature comes out of the tank of chemicals and reveals himself to his creator. I had to lie in this tepid water, which gradually got colder and colder and colder. Then there was another occasion when I was shot in the eye. I don't know whether the chemical composition of blood has changed very much over the years, but in order to get that effect I had to put some makeup blood in the palm of my hand. Then, when I was shot, I covered my eye and took my hand away and you saw all the blood all over the place. And when this happened, I gave vent to an ear-splitting shriek which literally paralyzed everybody on the set. (Laughs) I don't think they'd ever heard anything like it, and it was genuine because there's some agent in this blood—glycerine, whatever—and it felt like somebody had put a red hot poker into my eye.

MAX: Was this the first time that you were paired with Peter Cushing?

CL: Yes.

MAX: Can you tell us about your relationship with him?

CL: Wonderful man. A dear, sweet man and a wonderful actor. One of the finest actors I've ever seen or had the privilege of working with. I always told Peter that he should have been a priest, and I meant it in the very best sense of the word. There's such an essential goodness about him, as all his friends and acquaintances will tell you. There isn't one who won't tell you how gracious he was and is and always will be. What a masterly actor! And rightly recognized a couple of years ago with the award of the OBE—the Order of the British Empire. When I was asked to comment on



RIGHT: In 1957, Hammer superstars Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee brought new life to the Frankenstein legend.



Christopher Lee studies his script as Boris Karloff heads for the nearest exit on the set of 1968's THE CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR. Barbara Steele co-starred.

that, I said it was far too little and far too late, which I still believe very strongly. A man of so many different talents, a marvelous painter, a marvelous builder. A man who has, since 1970, sincerely had only one wish in the world: to join his wife, who died in 1970. It was the end, in a sense, of Peter's earthly life. He just lives to join her. And it's totally genuine. I respect him enormously as a person. I love him as a friend. He's a marvelous man, and you will never come across any actor or actress or any writer or director or producer or any technician who will not say the same thing. It's a kind of wonderful loving kindness that he has, and it isn't just convenience. It's real. That's why I feel he would have made a wonderful priest, but he didn't. He became a wonderful actor instead.

MAX: You also knew Boris Karloff...

CL: Oh, yes.

MAX: Shared some of the same roles...

CL: We never discussed it; that's the strange thing. The first time I ever worked with him was in the television series COLONEL MARCH OF SCOTLAND YARD. Of course, I knew all about him. I'd seen most of his films and been chilled and thrilled by them over the years. I never thought I'd ever become an actor in this particular area and certainly never thought I would meet him, let alone work with him. That was the first time. The second time, it was in a film called CORRIDORS OF BLOOD. It was a very, very good movie in which he played a surgeon who tried to alleviate the pain and agony of his

patients during operations by anesthetizing them. I played a resurrectionist, a grave robber who provided him with the corpses on which he experimented—which is something that historically did happen with the two famous resurrectionists, Burke and Hare, who were executed for robbing graveyards. That was a marvelous experience and I began to get to know him. I occasionally asked him about the parts he'd played. I was a little hesitant, because he'd been so great in them, and he didn't discuss it with me, really, at all. Occasionally I would ask him about Lon Chaney and some of the people he'd worked with; we would talk about that. And then I did my third film with him, which was one of the last films he ever made in his life. Not, alas, a good film. I just wanted to be in it with him before he left us. It was called THE CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ALTAR. He was old, infirm, couldn't walk properly. Couldn't breathe because of emphysema, but the courage of that man and the sheer guts that shone through is something I will never forget. He never intended to retire. Actors basically don't; not real ones, anyway. We lived next door to each other at one time. Naturally, the word went 'round that the garbage collectors had to collect the bodies every day. (Laughs)

MAX: Any other anecdotes about Karloff?

CL: During the filming of CORRIDORS OF BLOOD, which was originally titled DOCTOR FROM SEVEN DIALS, he always used to say, "I'm just a poor old man

who happens to have strayed in from the street. What am I but somebody who used to sweep up the floors of the studio? I mean, I don't know why you put me in front of a camera." That was his great joke, this poor old man who's so helpless and so useless and only good for sweeping up the studio. (Laughs) So at the wrap party he was solemnly presented with a broom, which he loved. He had a wonderful sense of humor and fun.

MAX: Let's talk about THE MUMMY. That must have been a very difficult picture to make.

CL: It was a killer. The costume was difficult to wear and couldn't be taken off once it had been put on—rather like the one in FRANKENSTEIN. That was one of the toughest things, physically, I think I've ever had to do. I did things in that film that Mr. Schwarzenegger might have found difficult to do. I wouldn't have believed that I could literally bend down and lift somebody off the ground, but I did it when somebody said, "Action!" Of course, I pulled all the muscles in my neck and shoulders. That goes without saying. There were other moments...

MAX: For instance?

CL: When I burst through the glass windows, they were real glass and not sugar. It just went straight through like needles. When I was shot, the explosions were detonated underneath the costume, of course. You have to remember that special effects in those days—we're going back 30 years now—were very much in their infancy. If you were blown up, you were blown up, or very close to it.

MAX: That must have been pretty unpleasant for you.

CL: It wasn't easy in any other respect, because I could only literally open my eyes. The makeup was completely rigid and restricting. When you are restricted from making physical effects with your face, it is much more difficult, obviously, and much more demanding. Film acting is basically done with your mind and with your eyes. If it doesn't show in your eyes, it doesn't convince anybody. But it did enable me, with movement and with the eyes, to create a character once the priest had become the mummy. I remember vividly two scenes in that film. One was coming up out of the mud. I had to get down underneath it and, at a given signal, like a tug on a string, to come up. Also, I remember carrying the girl through the swamp. There was a tank in the studio, and underneath it was filled with machinery, with pipes and gadgets and things to create the bubbles and all the various special effects. Of course, I kept crashing into 'em because I didn't know where they were, and I was nearly fracturing my shins.

MAX: Any more horror stories?

CL: There was another occasion when I had to come through a door. Somebody

had, I hope unthinkingly, bolted it, and I hit it with my shoulder. I smashed straight through the door. The door was supposed to be a breakaway door, so when I hit it, boom! It wasn't. Yes, there were some pretty rugged moments on that film. And there were also some very, very funny ones, because my face was rigid; my mouth was closed by the makeup. I'm standing there, freezing to death in the water, covered in mud and hating every minute, with the most terrible language coming out from behind this rigid mask. We had a lot of laughs on that.

MAX: Still, the results were certainly worth the effort.

CL: It was a very good movie. It looked absolutely wonderful; it looked like a multi million dollar film. You know, the real stars of Hammer, in my opinion, were people like Bernard Robinson, the art director, and the many cameramen, directors of photography, and the people who did the makeup. I thought the stars were behind the camera more than in front of it. The people on the floor, as we say.

MAX: How did you create the character of Count Dracula for the classic *HORROR OF DRACULA*?

CL: I read the book. It's all there. I think I instinctively, perhaps, added dimensions to the character that people didn't expect. I regarded this character as heroic, romantic, erotic. Irresistible to women. Unstoppable by men. And based, of course, on a real person. It's all in the book. Some of the language is slightly archaic, but you've got to realize it was written quite a long time ago. I simply read the book, and then I started using whatever powers of invention I possessed myself. I decided to play him as a malevolent hero, as a man of immense dignity, immense strength, immense power. He's a kind of superman, actually.

MAX: An immortal superman...

CL: I don't imagine anybody would wish for immortality. I can't think of anything more catastrophic to a human being—like the story of the Wandering Jew, condemned by Christ to wander the Earth. Dracula is condemned to immortality, and can exist only through the power of blood. "The blood is the life"—the famous phrase. Now, can you imagine anything more unattractive? You cannot die. You are living and yet you are dead. The undead. Like the Flying Dutchman, condemned to live forever, to round the Cape, because he blasphemed. Many of us would say, "Oh, give me another five years, another 10, another 20, as long as I'm healthy." But to live forever? And only be able to do so at night? And only be able to do it by draining the very essence from other people? Now, if you have all that in your mind, you've got a pretty good challenge, haven't you, as an actor? And if it comes off, you've won a pretty big victory. That was something that came out of my mind, my instincts, having read the book. I thought, "Well, this is what the character is like; this, I think, is the right way to play him."

MAX: And it was a great success.

CL: I remember the premiere in New York; I think it was the Mayfair Theatre. I'd never been to New York. Peter Cushing had, and Jimmy Carreras and Tony Hinds. Jimmy Carreras was the head, with Tony Hinds, of Hammer. We went to the top of the balcony, and we sat underneath the projection booth. It was midnight, special showing, and most of the audience were show business. They wanted to relax, and they were going to have fun. They came into this theatre with flasks and other things to while away the time, and the atmosphere, to say the least,

was very jolly. Finally, the lights went down, people settled down, the curtains parted. Along came the credits and there's the tomb with the name "Dracula," blood smattering on it—and they roared. I said, "I'm getting out of here; I can't stand this. This is going to be a disaster." And this kept going until the famous scene in which Jonathan Harker, played by John Van Eyssen, meets me for the first time. I daresay you remember the scene; it's become part of classic movie history. He feels the presence and he turns around and there, at the top of the stairs, is this silhouette. I tell you, the place erupted. The roof nearly came off. Perhaps they expected to see somebody wearing white tie and tails in the middle of Transylvania, walking through a cobweb. Perhaps they expected to hear a macabre foreign voice, or see a strange-looking person with a green face or whatever. I just walked down the staircase, walked over to Harker. I said, "Good evening, Mr. Harker"—and the silence was quite remarkable. For the rest of the film there wasn't a sound, because I presented them with a character they were not expecting. Totally unconventional and totally different, and that's why it worked.

MAX: Great story. What about *THE GORGON*? That time you got to play the good guy.

CL: Yes, I'm on the side of the angels in that. Sort of Einstein, really; a man of great and brilliant brain. Even the makeup, the moustache and the wig, was Einsteinian, if I could use such a phrase. Strangely enough, I played a lot of characters for Hammer Films who were not bad guys. In fact, after doing *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, the next part I played was the romantic lead, Sir Henry Baskerville, in *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*. I think *THE GORGON* worked. It looked absolutely wonderful; the photography was superb. Peter was the one, actually, who played the unsympathetic character. And dear Barbara Shelley was a superb actress. She was in many Hammer films, including *THE GORGON*.

MAX: The story was inspired, wasn't it, by the original Greek legend?

CL: Well, everybody knows the story of the Gorgon. Perseus succeeded in cutting off the head by looking at the reflection in his shield, so he didn't actually look at the Gorgon. In the film, I slay the Gorgon in much the same way: with a sword, a big cavalry saber. I look at her reflection in the mirror; I don't look directly into her eyes. The problem—I referred earlier to special effects being in their infancy—the problem was the snakes. Terrible. Today they do it with opticals, but in those days it was terribly difficult and there simply wasn't the money in the budget to come up with a totally adequate nest of snakes.

MAX: In *THE TERROR OF THE TONGS*, you're an Occidental actor playing a Chinese crime lord. What was that like?



As *THE MUMMY*, Christopher Lee had difficulties with some underwater plumbing while pursuing Yvonne Furneaux. Peter Cushing and Eddie Byrne co-starred in the 1959 Hammer production.

CL: Strangely enough, I've played Chinese seven times. I played Fu Manchu, I think, four or five times, and I played a Chinese detective in an Edgar Wallace story. That was 30 years ago.

MAX: Was your makeup in TERROR OF THE TONGS difficult to achieve?

CL: The most difficult makeup of all, without doubt, and the most uncomfortable. You have to have a false eyelid to get what they call the epicanthic fold, but to get that effect you have to take molds of your eyelids and then put in a piece that goes underneath the eyebrow. I couldn't look down, or my own eyelids would appear underneath the false ones. And if I looked up, all you would see would be the whites of my eyes. So the whole character had to be played in a very level headed way. Literally.

MAX: You've really had your problems with makeup, haven't you?

CL: I remember doing a Fu Manchu film in Hong Kong. I was made up on the Hong Kong side in the Hilton Hotel, had to take the ferry over to the Kowloon side. I had this long, thin moustache. I covered my eyes with dark glasses in order that it shouldn't be too obvious, because the people on the ferries were all Chinese. I was getting a few strange looks, and eventually somebody came over to me and said, "Excuse me, sir, but may I ask a personal question? I hope you don't mind. Are you an actor?" And I said, "Yes." He said, "Nobody wears a



Before **HORROR OF DRACULA** (1958), vampires rarely met so graphically grisly a finish. That's his own foot poor Drac's head is resting upon.

moustache like that except the very, very old." I said, "Well, I hope my playing a Chinese won't offend anybody." And he said, "Would you mind taking off your glasses?" So I took off my glasses and he was peering at me, and then his friends came and peered. And they said, "Yes, that's pretty good makeup." And then one

of them said, "Excuse me, sir, but what is your Oriental background?" I said, "Well, I don't think there is one, actually, in my family." He said, "What is your name, sir?" And I said Lee. That, I'm afraid, made the matter much more confused than it was meant to be!

MAX: How would you compare the films that you made with films nowadays?

CL: Well, the main difference, of course, is the budgets. That's obvious. Money. The difference, apart from that, is that we were making a somewhat different kind of film. What you would call in the Gothic area, classical stories, whereas today they're mostly contemporary or set in the future. Today, everything seems to me to involve two extremes. On the one hand you have special effects; on the other hand you have make-ups. The makeups become more and more unbelievable, the special effects more and more overpowering, and the poor actor is caught in the middle. I mean, he's swamped. In addition, the violence, the graphic realism, is, to me, repulsive. The ones we did were fairy stories. We had to convince you, the audience, that it could happen. If we convinced you, our victory was all the greater. Quite honestly, I don't think that there are actors and actresses around today who could play the parts we played and make them believable. Because that was what we did: We made the unbelievable believable.



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Better Holmes and Watson

The Granada Series Reviewed

THE BLUE CARBUNCLE
Adaptation: Paul Finney
Direction: David Carson

"... It already has a sinister history. There have been two murders, a vitriol-throwing, a suicide, and several robberies brought about for the sake of this forty-grain weight of crystallized charcoal."

Given this grim description (by Sherlock Holmes himself) of the infamous blue carbuncle, one might readily expect the blood-soaked stone to draw the Great Detective and his companion, Dr. John H. Watson, down fog-filled byways strewn with the victims of the "Carbuncle Curse." But, no, it never becomes necessary for our heroes to traverse the mean streets of 19th-century London, because the accom-

modating carbuncle comes to them.

On Christmas Eve.

In a goose.

Perhaps more profoundly than in the original short story by Sir Arthur Conan

Doyle, which was first published in the January 1892 edition of *The Strand Magazine*, Granada TV's *THE BLUE CARBUNCLE* is, literally, a Dickens of a tale. A Dickensian atmosphere, reminiscent of the beloved author's Christmas books, and a subtle emphasis on comedy—the stolen gem of the title is hidden, after all, in that goose—lends the production a warm Yuletide glow, easily making it one of the most charming episodes of *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*. No simple murder case, this, *CARBUNCLE* is a deft puzzle in which the Master Sleuth must deduce the manner by which the Countess of Morcar's missing bauble has found its way into Henry Baker's bird. An innocent ex convict, John Horner (Desmond McNamara), stands accused by the Countess (Rosalind Knight) of the jewel's theft, and Holmes and Watson set matters straight without once meeting the man who benefits most by their intervention.

Three scenes in particular blend Dickens and Conan Doyle to perfection. In



Jeremy Brett

the first, Horner and his wife, Jennie (Amelda Brown), stand before a toy-shop window, choosing gifts they can ill afford for their offspring and behaving very much like the Cratchits in *A Christmas Carol*, until Conan Doyle's Inspector Bradstreet (Brian Miller) appears on the scene to arrest the former jailbird. In the second, Henry Baker (Frank Middlemass), a wholly sympathetic eccentric who has fallen on hard times, relates the tale of the goose to an inquisitive but cool Sherlock Holmes. In the last, Horner is reunited with his wife and children on a snow-covered London street for a final image that happily recalls the closing shot (in which Tiny Tim runs to the eager arms of a reformed Scrooge) of the splendid 1951 production of *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*.

For those who prefer a touch less sentiment and a tad more detection in their detective stories, *THE BLUE CARBUNCLE* is the adventure wherein Holmes "constructs" a man solely by the evidence found on the gentleman's hat.

"What do you gather from that battered old felt?" asks a bemused Watson, who plainly sees nothing beyond the fact that the initials "H.B." upon the headband stand for Henry Baker, a name attached by tag to the goose that accompanied the bowler to Baker Street.

Holmes smiles.

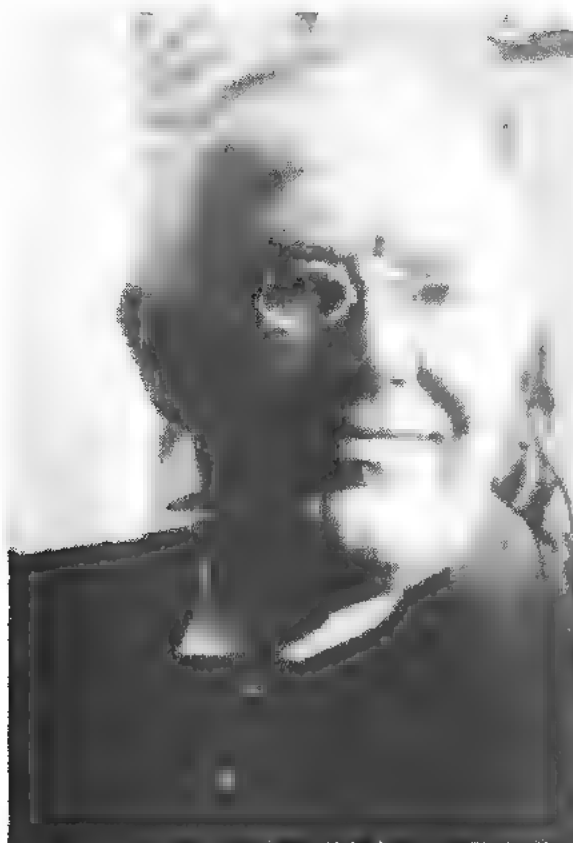
"That the man is highly intellectual is, of course, obvious," claims the detective, "and also that he was very well-to-do within the past three years, although now he has fallen upon evil days. He has foresight, but less now than formerly, pointing to a moral retrogression which, when taken with the decline in his fortunes, seems to indicate an evil influence—probably



All photos © Granada Television of England

ABOVE: What better place to hide a priceless gem than inside a—goose? Frank Mills, Jeremy Brett, and feathered friend in *THE BLUE CARBUNCLE*. **NEXT PAGE:** It's a busy day in the neighborhood for Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson (Jeremy Brett and David Burke).





As Jephro Rucastle, Joss Ackland adds another memorable portrait to the Sherlock Holmes Rogues' Gallery in *THE COPPER BEECHES*.

drink. That may also account for the fact that his wife has ceased to love him. . ."

The actors supporting Jeremy Brett and David Burke in their star turns as Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are uniformly fine, with Knight as the frosty Countess and Middlemass as the Micawberesque Henry Baker stand-outs in their delineation of the haves and have-nots of Victorian England. Patrick Gowers' use of traditional Christmas themes to augment his usual worthy score adds as much sparkle to the proceedings as does a bejeweled goose to a holiday dinner.

THE COPPER BEECHES
Adaptation: Bill Craig
Direction: Paul Annett

A dark, gloomy, isolated mansion in the quiet English countryside. A locked tower room. A vicious mastiff. The cruel master of the house and the virginal young innocent who comes to live with him. The cold, heartless wife. The sly housekeeper harboring a family secret. The drunken stableman.

No, it's not *Jane Eyre* or *Rebecca* or a Victorian thriller by Wilkie Collins. It's Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches," a Sher-

lock Holmes tale with stronger-than-usual ties to Gothic romance.

Legend has it that the author's mother suggested the plot of "The Copper Beeches" as an alternative to her son's dastardly plans for the last of the original 12 Sherlock Holmes adventures contracted by *The Strand Magazine*. (It was published in June 1892.) Conan Doyle wanted nothing more than to kill off Holmes. Mama wouldn't hear of it.

Granada, too, refused to bring the Great Detective's life—at least his life on television—to an end. *THE COPPER BEECHES*, which launched their second collection of Holmes mysteries in August 1985, a year and two months after the first set had drawn to an end, marked a fine start to a series that, in coming weeks, would introduce Mycroft Holmes, Inspector G. Lestrade, and Professor James Moriarty to avid viewers.

The plot? Violet Hunter (Natasha Richardson) is hired by jovial Jephro Rucastle (Joss Ackland) to act as governess to his son, Edward (Stuart Shenberg), "a dear little romper just six years old." Rucastle seems inordinately

fond of the little beast: "If you could only see him killing cockroaches with his slipper," he beams, while Violet and the head of the employment agency, Miss Stoper (Patience Collier), look on in horror. Arriving at the family manse, called the Copper Beeches (though most of the surrounding trees are dead), Violet is given a dead bird by the "dear little romper;" it's his idea of a welcoming present. Matters worsen when the governess is asked by her employer and his stony wife (Lottie Ward) to don a certain electric-blue dress, sit in a certain chair by the window, and cut her long, luxurious tresses. It is only when the frightened young girl finds, in a dresser drawer, a shock of hair that perfectly matches her own that she turns to the world's first consulting detective for help.

Jeremy Brett is at his irascible best as Holmes in this beautifully mounted episode, whether he is berating David Burke's much put upon Dr. Watson for romanticizing their exploits (thus setting up the wildly romantic tale to follow) or ill-concealing his initial disinterest in Violet Hunter's plight. Richardson, daughter of Vanessa Redgrave and Tony Richardson, makes her acting debut in *THE COPPER BEECHES* and does well within the confines of the role. It is Ackland, however, who steals this particular show. Charming and cajoling in the most threatening manner imaginable, laughing heartily in the grand tradition of Sydney Greenstreet, he is a memorable and worthy opponent for Sherlock Holmes, and a fine meal for the mastiff.

—Richard Valley



Miss Violet Hunter (Natasha Richardson) has been offered the post of governess at above-average wages if only she will cut her hair. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson (Jeremy Brett and David Burke) ponder the possible reasons for the untoward request.

Back Again! The 1991 Dark Shadows on Videotape by Marcy Robin

The first DARK SHADOWS was cancelled by ABC in April 1971, after almost five years. It spent most of those years as a popular cult-TV hit, an afternoon soap opera filled with horror and the supernatural; it brought daytime out of the "housewife" stereotype. It entertained and spooked an audience of all ages and backgrounds with vampires, ghosts, werewolves, witches, a warlock, time travel, parallel time, and variations on such classic literature as *Wuthering Heights*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Frankenstein*, "The Lottery," and others. But it was cancelled.

Then DARK SHADOWS was revived—as befits its most-popular plot of an 18th-century vampire released from his chained coffin into the modern world. NBC carried it as a prime-time mid-season replacement show from January to March 1991. This, too, was cancelled. Yet that vampire, who so captured the public fancy 25 years ago, still isn't quite dead.

MPI Home Video is issuing all 13 hours of the NBC series. Episode #1 (the two-hour premiere movie, broadcast on January 13, 1991) is due in video stores nationwide on October 7, 1992. Episodes #2 through 12, each approximately one hour in length, arrive in monthly releases next year.

What set DARK SHADOWS apart in the first place was the vampire Barnabas Collins (Jonathan Frid in 1967, Ben Cross in the revival). His introduction, an unprecedented effort to save a Gothic romance daytime series from failing ratings, succeeded beyond expectations. When NBC brought the series back, it focused on the vampire immediately, condensing the story of his plight—and the reasons for his very existence—into the limited preliminary run. Audience fascination with the vampire had worked in 1967; it would work again. So the plot focused on Barnabas' story—in both 1990 and 1790. But, as with any TV show, revisions were made, with scenes edited or cut entirely before the broadcast date.

The video of Episode #1 provides what was deleted. It includes approximately 15 minutes of additional footage: scenes scripted and filmed, but cut before final broadcast. The single-hour episodes may also contain similar unaired footage.

Some of the restored material in Video Episode #1 extends beginnings or endings of aired scenes. Others are filmed scenes that were never broadcast. These add character development, explain relationships and actions, expand the given story line. There are establishing shots of buildings, "scene set-ups" such as one of the Sheriff's car approaching Collinwood, and "atmosphere" in the form of exterior or interior views.

Marcy Robin is the editor of Shadowgram, the official DARK SHADOWS newsletter, and author of numerous articles, short stories, and books on DARK SHADOWS, STAR WARS, and more.



DARK SHADOWS photos © 1991 National Broadcasting Co.

One early reinstated scene shows Roger Collins (Roy Thinnes) and Elizabeth Collins-Stoddard (Jean Simmons) discussing David Collins' (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) difficult behavior. Roger fumes over the family lawyer hiring a governess whom they don't even know, and then grows wistful. He describes a walk with his son on the beach "last night." Roger babbled about "anything" in an effort to relate to the boy, but was stunned by David's only response: "He wanted to know if I liked him." Roger could only hug him and emphasize, "David, you're my son. I love you." But David ran away. Roger reveals that he "would have left him to die in that burning room" to save his mother's "sanity;" an agonized Roger now can only "resent him being alive."

Later, Victoria Winters (Joanna Going) meets Roger for the first time and gently tries to learn how long he and David were apart and why. She notices some striking paintings, but her compliments are brushed aside by Roger. She also gets hints about Roger's "ill" wife. At breakfast the next morning, she describes her first contact with David, who "started out by trying to scare the living daylights out of me. . .and he hit the jackpot." Unfazed, she expects this "mischief," as it is natural for a child to test a new authority. Roger simply warns, "I'm afraid you will find David to be a very difficult child."

The romance of Joe Haskell (Michael T. Weiss) and Daphne Collins (Rebecca Staab) heats up in the restored footage. After Vicki leaves the Blue Whale with Willie Loomis (Jim Fyfe), the couple discusses the surly, "crazy" handyman, but they are distracted by their own building passion. Joe "grabs her, lifting her clear off her feet," and then carries her to his car.

Their relationship is strained after Daphne is mysteriously attacked. While she's unconscious in the hospital, Joe tells Dr. Fisher (Wayne Tippit) that he will stay with her. (Collinsport Hospital's exterior is shown, too.) Later, when Daphne is resting in bed at Collinwood, Carolyn Collins (Barbara Blackburn) gently

kisses Joe for comfort while Elizabeth joins them in their vigil.

All existing footage of Barnabas Collins was broadcast, but his presence is felt in some new scenes. An early NBC promo included a quick clip of Carolyn "howling" along with the sudden racket of dogs outside. She teases Vicki about "the strange creatures of the Maine woods." This extended scene also shows Carolyn's efforts to be friendly to Vicki, and warn her that odd things can happen "in the boonies." Vicki stares out the window—and sees a dark silhouette standing in the shadowy trees.

Sheriff Patterson (Michael Cavanaugh) discusses his suspicions about Willie in another scene, asking Vicki if she noticed the handyman "acting pretty strange" at the Blue Whale. He reveals that "an animal" apparently isn't responsible for the attacks, a statement that alarms Elizabeth. Patterson and Roger together go to find Willie and get some answers. When their hunt is in vain, they grumpily agree that he is "a very strange young man." Later, Carolyn gives Vicki a lift to the stables in her car. Carolyn explains that she came home to be with her mother, postponing pursuit of a photography career. A final nice touch has Carolyn suggesting that Vicki ride "the chestnut mare. Her name's Carolyn."



Where would DARK SHADOWS fans be without their Willie? Jim Fyfe returns as Willie Loomis in the latest video incarnation of TV's best-loved spook show.

Though DARK SHADOWS was cancelled twice—in 1971 and in 1991—these videos help to keep the public aware of it. The original series has been on MPI Home Video for three years, and its non-syndicated episodes will follow soon. The original also is part of the Sci-Fi Channel's programming. There are new licensed products and continuing fan enthusiasm—a DARK SHADOWS fandom has existed since 1975 and is crucially instrumental in keeping the show "alive" and well. There are quality publications that focus on both series and thoroughly describe individual episodes. There also is an official direct news-and-update source for all aspects of both series. An annual convention features many original and new cast and crew members in question-and-answer and autograph sessions, along with displays, rare video programming, and licensed products. Fans come from across the U.S. and beyond.

Each time DARK SHADOWS has been available, its fandom has grown. The MPI 1991 DARK SHADOWS tapes will continue this exposure, helping to keep Barnabas not deep in the dark night, but bathed in the glow of a TV screen, where he first "saw the light" 25 years ago.



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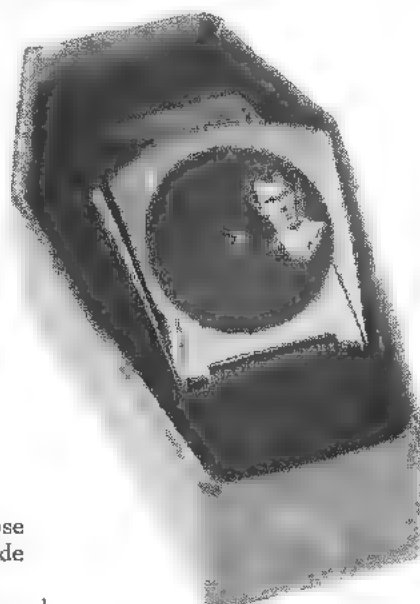


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Dracula's Daughter

The Balderston Version

by Jack R. Phillips



ABOVE: In 1931, Bela Lugosi welcomed fans to the Golden Age of Horror as DRACULA. The role made him a star. **RIGHT:** Five years later, the Golden Age came to an abrupt conclusion with DRACULA'S DAUGHTER (played by Gloria Holden). Lugosi, initially cast in the long-awaited sequel, ultimately found himself replaced by a wax dummy that didn't even resemble him.

Jack R. Phillips, West Coast sales manager for Kingsley Electronics, is currently writing a remake of NORTH BY NORTHWEST. He formerly wrote for the Mystery Newsletter.

To many, Universal studios first put itself on the Hollywood map back in the 30s when it stumbled onto the fact that there was money, and lots of it, to be made by producing artistic, intelligent horror pictures. Following the show biz rule that the surest route to profits is to follow up one hit with another just like it, Universal seized the opportunity to shoot a sequel to its greatest box-office hit of the depression, 1931's DRACULA. At that, Universal wasn't the first studio to jump on the vampire bandwagon set in motion by DRACULA's success. Prestigious MGM recruited DRACULA director Tod Browning to helm MARK OF THE VAMPIRE (1935); a few years earlier, on the other side of the railroad tracks, the rinky-dink Majestic Pictures shot THE VAMPIRE BAT (1933) on Universal's own back lot. David O. Selznick hit upon the idea of shooting a Dracula movie, using as a basis the Bram Stoker story "Dracula's Guest," but the project became ensnared in copyright problems and never materialized.

The evolution of a motion picture from pre-production to final cut is often a tumultuous process, but DRACULA'S DAUGHTER had a bumpier ride than most. Universal faced the project with baffling uncertainty. Several approaches to the story were



tried and quickly abandoned. Bela Lugosi was signed to reprise his role of the Vampire King, only to be abruptly paid off, his services unused. A. Edward Sutherland, known primarily for his comedies, was brought in to direct, only to be replaced by Western specialist Lambert Hillyer. Though several versions of the script were considered, only Garrett Fort, who wrote the original DRACULA screenplay, got final approval for his story.

Among the writers originally tapped for the assignment was John L. Balderston, a seemingly natural candidate for the job. The Anglo-American writer had worked on both early and final drafts of not only Universal's DRACULA but also FRANKENSTEIN (1931), THE MUMMY (1932), THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD (1935), and BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN (1935), as well as MGM's classic MAD LOVE (1935). Balderston's 20-page treatment, dated January 1934, was apparently written when Selznick became interested in the film. Like the later Garrett Fort script, Balderston's version uses DRACULA as a starting point, but both writers had entirely different tales to tell.

The following is a condensation of Balderston's story, which, had it been filmed, might have become one of the great Golden Age horror classics.

It is not yet dawn, but already figures dart in and out of the shadows of Carfax Abbey. Deep in the bowels of the decayed mansion, Professor Van Helsing and Jonathan Harker frantically track Count Dracula. But the Count is not unaccompanied. In his arms is Mina Seward, Harker's young fiancée, whom the vampire has marked as his newest bride. Assuming that the madman Renfield has cast his lot with the vampire's enemies, Dracula chokes him to death and flees to the safety of his coffin—but Van Helsing and Harker are closing in and within moments find the Count's resting place. Harker grimly faces the task of driving a wooden shaft into Dracula's heart (this was an apparent gaffe on the part of the writer: in DRACULA, Van Helsing handles the task himself), assuring the creature's destruction. Finally free of the Count's satanic influence, Mina rejoins her suitor and the couple leave the scene in the standard happy ending.

Days later, Van Helsing is beginning to have his doubts. Arriving at Dr. Seward's office on the day before Jonathan and Mina are to be married, the Professor announces that their work has only just begun. After recapping the plot of the first film, Van Helsing proposes that he and Seward sojourn to Dracula's ancestral castle in Transylvania to search for the vampire's many undead wives. Not telling Jonathan and Mina of their destination, the pair make their plans to depart for the Continent.

A dissolve moves the action to Transylvania, where two peasants cross themselves and mumble a prayer as they approach Castle Dracula. Another dissolve and the scene becomes the village inn. A weeping young mother tells the police that her baby has been stolen; another brings news that her husband has mysteriously vanished. Both are convinced that vampires still roam the battlements of the castle, but the skeptical gendarmes "pooh-pooh" the idea, assuring the women that the crumbling structure has been desolate for centuries. Enter Van Helsing and Seward, ending their tiring journey from England. They listen sympathetically and warn the police that the horrors will continue.

By now, the sun has set on Castle Dracula. Three women, brides of the Count, slink out of their coffins to greet the night. Half hidden in the shadows is yet another female vampire, though this one distinctly conveys a sense of authority over the others. With contemptuous abandon, she tosses to the others a small bag, which squirms as if it contained a living creature, perhaps a newborn child. The ravenous brides accept their prey, but complain that they need more than human blood; they need strong young men, whom the other woman greedily keeps for herself. Dismiss-

ing their grievances, the woman insists that she alone rules as long as Dracula is in England. Claiming her rights as the daughter of Dracula, the vampire woman decides to follow in her father's footsteps and leaves for England while the others fight over the doomed infant.

The scene dissolves to another room in the castle, in which a young village man, apparently the missing husband, finds himself locked. The door suddenly opens to reveal Dracula's daughter, with a whip in her hand. Realizing his fate, the man drops to his knees, only to feel the sting of the vampire's whip. Then, almost as if undergoing a change of heart, she tenderly descends upon her victim, softly whispering, drawn instinctively to his throat.

Hours later, well after dawn, Seward and Van Helsing arrive at the castle, finding the body of the dead man and the three coffins containing Dracula's brides. Stake in hand, Van Helsing carries out his gruesome duties, not realizing that his work is still far from over.

The action moves to a posh London hotel, where Dracula's daughter, using the name Countess Szekeley, maintains her new residence. All eyes focus on her as she enters a dance hall with three men by her side. Soon there are whispers about her strange activities and the fact that she is never seen during the day. There are even unsettling comments about her string of male lovers, all of whom have the appearance of dope fiends. The Countess surveys the crowd and immediately sets her eyes on a young aristocrat, Lord Edward "Ned" Wadhurst, who is escorting his fiancée, Helen Swaythling. The attraction between Wadhurst and the strange lady appears to be mutual, and soon it is clear that Dracula's daughter has found another paramour.

Later that night, the Countess returns to her apartment, where she is greeted by a bevy of servants, all Arabs and gypsies, all apparently deaf mutes. Also in attendance is a pallid young man who has been reduced to a frazzled wreck. The Countess laughs at him contemptuously, ordering him into her boudoir while the servants follow with whips and chains. The scene is interrupted by the arrival of Ned Wadhurst, drawn to the beautiful Szekeley. The vampire woman entices him with the promise of "strange delights" that only she can provide.

Hours later, Szekeley steals into the local zoo. Discreetly sidestepping the watchmen, she purposefully walks to a cage housing a particularly ferocious specimen of the timber wolf. Crouching, she speaks to the creature in hushed tones. At daybreak, the befuddled guards gather near the empty cage.

Back from Transylvania, Dr. Seward finds himself plagued by a sense of foreboding. A young man, known to have been the lover of the mysterious Countess Szekeley, has been found dead, suffering from loss of blood, with the tell-tale mark of the vampire on his neck. Van Helsing, who has just returned from Holland, pulls up to the Seward home in a taxi and has a hair-raising encounter with the huge timber wolf. The dazed Professor is helped inside, and, after conferring with Seward, is convinced that Countess Szekeley is a vampire.

Van Helsing sends for Chester Morris, a young American friend of Wadhurst, who listens skeptically to the Professor's claim that Ned is doomed to become a vampire if he continues his affair with Szekeley. Anxious for Helen's well-being, Morris reluctantly agrees to help. Learning that Szekeley has disappeared, Van Helsing arranges a meeting between Ned and Helen. Ned's relationship with the vampire has taken an obvious toll, and he appears in a desperate state. Begging for Helen's forgiveness, he promises he'll do his best to lure Szekeley from her hiding place so Van Helsing can destroy her forever.

The following days prove torturous for Wadhurst as he painfully tries to break the vampire's curse. When he is again overcome by Szekeley's hypnotic powers, Helen places a crucifix on

his brow, searing an imprint on his flesh. The diligent Van Helsing's search for the vampire's hiding place leads him to an abandoned churchyard, but the Countess' coffin is empty. As Van Helsing and Seward confer, Ned finds Szekeley eerily gliding through the yews of the graveyard. Claiming that he is the only one she has truly loved, she reveals her intention to have Ned take the place of the invincible Dracula. She then plans for both to rest in a catatonic state for 50 years, ensuring that their enemies will be long dead when they awaken. As the first rays of sunlight break over the horizon, the Countess flees.

Holding a "war council," Van Helsing places Ned under hypnosis to learn what he has already suspected, that Countess Szekeley has fled the country, returning to Castle Dracula. Determined to purge mankind of Dracula's evil spawn, Van Helsing, Ned, Helen, Dr. Seward, Morris, and the now married Jonathan and Mina embark for the Continent.

The party arrives at the village inn on the outskirts of Dracula's castle, but by this time Ned has so deteriorated that he is more vampire than human. As he sleeps by day and stirs restlessly at night, Ned is closely monitored so he won't escape. Deciding that it is time to strike, Van Helsing sets up camp on the mountain trail leading to the castle. As night falls, Van Helsing announces that he has secured a dispensation from the Cardinal, implying that the group's secret means of protection is the sacred wafer, the Host.

Tension mounts as midnight approaches. Bats hover over the camp and the eyes of wolves can be seen dimly in the firelight, but none dare to cross the circle of protection. Ned, handcuffed at his

own request, finally breaks under the strain and blindly fires a rifle into the night. In the mêlée, Morris carelessly steps out of the circle, only to be torn to shreds by the hungry wolves.

The horror-filled night finally ends as the sun breaks through the clouds, but the ordeal has left the group despondent and exhausted and the horses dead from fright. Warily, the survivors consider giving up, but Van Helsing insists that Morris' sacrifice should not be in vain. Noting that winter comes early in Carpathia, he secretly hatches a new plan. That night, Van Helsing discreetly unfastens Ned's handcuffs while the others sleep. A bat suddenly appears and, in the distance, wolves softly howl as though they were greeting a new leader. As snow begins to fall, Ned quietly disappears into the night, but returns a few hours later.

The next morning finds Van Helsing announcing his triumph. Though Ned remembers nothing of his activities the night before, the Professor notes that the footprints he left in the snow will lead them directly to Szekeley's hiding place. The party quickly follows the trail to the castle battlements and finds a door to the grave vault. Ned and the others enter and find the vampire's resting place. After prying open the coffin, Van Helsing hands Ned the stake and hammer. As Helen prays, the faltering Ned struggles to summon up courage to free himself of Szekeley's curse. Finally, prompted by Helen, he drives the wooden shaft into the Countess' heart while Van Helsing reads the burial service.

The scar on Ned's forehead disappears, signaling the end of Dracula's spell. Ned and Helen embrace before the final fade-out.



Dracula's Daughter

The Film

by Richard Scrivani

Producing a sequel to a successful film has long been common practice in Hollywood, but turning out a piece of work that does justice to the original and can stand on its own merits is rare. The version of *DRACULA'S DAUGHTER* that reached the screen in May of 1936 achieved that end. The initial follow-ups to Universal's horror classics were, not surprisingly, sequels to their first big hits, *DRACULA* and *FRANKENSTEIN*, both 1931 releases. The surprise was that both sequels boasted women as their new menaces. A mid-30s double bill of *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1935) and *DRACULA'S DAUGHTER* made this break with tradition even more apparent, with both bloodthirsty Countess and Monster's Bride peering out at moviegoers from theatre lobby displays. Though it has nowhere near the magnificent reputation of *BRIDE*, Universal's second vampire opus re-created the ambiance of the original film and returned us to its Carfax Abbey setting with the same skill as did the opening moments of the second *Frankenstein* film, in which the rioting villagers congregated at the base of the smoldering windmill. The fact that *DRACULA'S DAUGHTER* works as well as it does, flaws and all, is a testament to the abilities of the creative team involved. A major drawback to the *Dracula* sequel is that the title character's father does not return; thus, the story has to depend on an entirely new cast of characters (save one: Dr. Abraham Van Helsing) to carry us through. What helps greatly is that the shadow of *Dracula* hovers over the film like a shroud, giving us the feeling that he might round a corner at any moment. Van Helsing, neatly tying the threads of the films together, guides us into a story that introduces a new tragic

character, Countess Zaleska, whose struggle with her vampiric destiny gives the film the dimension it needs to succeed on its own. Aside from a heavy helping of comic relief between the romantic leads, which slows the film's pace needlessly (its running time is only 70 minutes), *DRACULA'S DAUGHTER* remains a favorite among die-hard Universal fans.



Dr. Von Helsing (that isn't a typo; it's spelled that way in DRACULA'S DAUGHTER), Sir Basil Humphrey, and the Transylvanian constabulary invade Castle Dracula. Pictured: Gilbert Emery, Edward Van (not Von) Sloan, George Sorel, and William von (not van) Brincken.

The opening credits present some of the disturbing images later seen as details from one of the Countess' macabre oil paintings. Making their way down the twisted staircase of Carfax Abbey—actually the watchtower staircase originally used in *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*—are two comic English bobbies, Hawkins (Halliwell Hobbes) and Albert (Billy Bevan), who discover the broken body of Renfield (played in *DRACULA* by Dwight Frye), murdered by the Vampire King shortly before the Count's own destruction at the hands of Van Helsing. Emerging from the cellar moments after the deed, the inexplicably-renamed Von Helsing (Edward Van Sloan) is apprehended and promptly arrested. After a full explanation of the previous film's incredible events, Scotland Yard's Sir Basil Humphrey (Gilbert Emery) remains—understandably—skeptical. The doctor feels that his only hope rests with his old friend and former student, Geoffrey Garth (Otto Kruger). Now a psychiatrist,

Garth listens to Von Helsing's tale and finds it problematical, but agrees to help him in any way he can.

Meanwhile, at Whitby Jail, the bodies of Count Dracula and Renfield are being guarded by the two policemen who discovered them. When Hawkins leaves, a mysterious black-cloaked woman



LEFT: Constable Hawkins (Halliwell Hobbes) examines the body of Count Dracula—searching for a wick, no doubt. **RIGHT:** Does Albert (Billy Beyan) die or doesn't he? Only Countess Zaleska (Gloria Holden) knows for sure, and the bat's got her tongue.

arrives and asks to see the Count's body. Albert refuses her request and is put into a trance; the body is stolen. In one of the film's best scenes, the woman, Dracula's daughter (Gloria Holden), and her valet, Sandor (Irving Pichel), destroy Dracula's body by fire and incantation on a mist-covered moor. Certain that she has exorcised the vampire's curse, the Countess is warned by Sandor that her attempts to blot out her legacy are futile.

This turns out to be true, as the following night finds her leaving her flat in search of a victim. A short time later, Garth and his fiancée, Janet (Marguerite Churchill), are at a party discussing Von Helsing's "vampire case" when Countess Marya Zaleska, an artist, is introduced. Zaleska learns that Garth is a psychiatrist and asks for his help. When he visits Zaleska's flat, he notices the absence of mirrors, but thinks nothing of it at the time. Zaleska tells Garth, as cryptically as possible, of her problem; he advises her to use the strength within herself to overcome her dark "compulsions." "Put it to a test," Garth insists, and Zaleska does just that, enlisting Sandor to entice a young girl, Lili (Nan Grey), to her studio with the intent of painting her portrait.

In a scene rich with lesbian overtones, Lili is hypnotized and attacked by the vampire. Found in the street, the critically ill Lili is

brought to a hospital, where Garth attempts to break through her trance with a new technique in hypnosis. However, her condition is so extreme that the shock of the treatment results in her death. The few words that Lili utters before dying are very revealing to Garth, as are two wounds on her neck, but he decides to reserve judgement until he can confer with Von Helsing. As Von Helsing's story gains in credence and the true nature of the Countess' "problem" becomes apparent, Garth confronts her and demands the truth. Zaleska cries, "But I've told you all I can, now," to which Garth replies icily, "You mean you've told me 'all you dare!'" When he demands the entire story, Zaleska has Sandor abduct Janet, and then makes a clean escape by airplane to her homeland. Informed by wire at Sir Basil's office of Garth's intent to follow, Von Helsing springs to his feet with the warning, "He's going to his death!"

The scene shifts to Transylvania. The simple peasant folk living in the shadow of Castle Dracula panic at the sight of a light in the castle window and shut themselves indoors. Dr. Garth arrives, convinces a coachman to deliver him as far as Borgo Pass, and walks from there to the castle. Thwarting Sandor's attempts to kill him with a crossbow, Garth confronts Zaleska, who takes him to

LEFT: The vampire Countess (Gloria Holden) has her way with the innocent Lili (Nan Grey)—and puts one over on the censors as well. **RIGHT:** Dr. Garth (Otto Kruger) hypnotises Lili (Nan Grey) in order to get the goods on DRACULA'S DAUGHTER.



the prostrate form of Janet, now under the same spell that took Lili's life. In a supreme act of self-sacrifice, Geoffrey agrees to become Zaleska's undead lover in exchange for Janet's life. But a jealous Sandor takes aim and sends the wooden shaft of an arrow through Zaleska's heart, destroying her instantly. Before he can release a second arrow, meant for Garth, Sandor is shot by Sir Basil, who with Von Helsing has traced the psychiatrist's path and arrived on the scene just in time. As Dracula's daughter lies dead, Sir Basil remarks, "The woman is beautiful." Von Helsing utters the final line, "She was beautiful when she died—a hundred years ago."

A moody and effective production, and not a bad picture to bring Universal's first horror cycle to a close, DRACULA'S

DAUGHTER remains a neglected work, possibly because of its lack of action and set pieces. Director Lambert Hillyer, who had helmed THE INVISIBLE RAY (1936) four months earlier, avoids the slow pacing of DRACULA and presides over a livelier cast of characters with a more contemporary delivery of dialogue. In the title role, Gloria Holden brings a dark, aristocratic, ultimately tragic quality to the Countess, and her physical appearance is in keeping with Lugosi's Count. Edward Van Sloan's performance is on every count superior to his stint in DRACULA: less stagy, more animated, and probably more pleasing to the actor himself. Otto Kruger, in a refreshing change of pace from the bland, conventional horror hero in the David Manners mold, carries off his part with self assurance and intelligence. The rest of the cast support the stars as well or better than their parts demand, notably Irving Pichel (who also worked in Hollywood as a director) as the dark and sinister Sandor.

Supposedly taken from Bram Stoker's story "Dracula's Guest" (actually a deleted chapter from *Dracula*), the final script, according to Michael Brunas in *Universal Horrors* (McFarland, 1990), more closely resembles the unused John Balderston treatment. Art Director Albert S. D'Agostino re-dressed and disguised the castle sets designed by Charles D. Hall for THE INVISIBLE RAY, though alert viewers can spot one of the observatory rooms used by Boris Karloff in the above-mentioned film as Otto Kruger searches Dracula's castle.

In many respects, DRACULA'S DAUGHTER is a mirror image of DRACULA. Whereas the original begins in Transylvania and ends in Carfax Abbey, we have the reverse situation here, the

film's climax bringing us full circle. In the first film, Dracula disposes of his crazed henchman, Renfield, when he believes he has been betrayed. Here, Sandor destroys the Countess when he feels he has been forsaken.

An odd incident occurs in one of the film's early scenes, when Constable Albert is discovered, zombie like, by his superiors, after having been hypnotized by the Countess. Nudged on the shoulder, he collapses; the viewer never learns whether he is dead or simply in a trance. The film provides several contradictory clues to the riddle: Since the Countess' hypnotic spell leads to death twice in the story, and the implication is made that her powers will destroy a third victim (Janet), the bobby might very well be dead in his chair. However, in the scene in question we have not yet seen

the full force of Zaleska's spell, so no fatal result is expected. Also, as Zaleska's only intent is to remove Dracula's body from the jail, there is no need to kill the constable. Perhaps most important, Zaleska is seeking release from her "life" of vampirism, so a needless murder is inconsistent with her desires. Finally, if she intends to do away with Albert, it is unlikely that she would tell him, "You will remember nothing."

Few will argue the fact that the vampire legend is deeply sexual in nature. Much of the appeal and endurance of Dracula is due to the sexual aspects of the character. Universal even heralded "The Strangest Passion the World Has Ever Known" in its publicity for the first film. There has always been a strong implication that Dracula's victims enjoy the experience, possibly experiencing orgasm before death. In DRACULA'S DAUGHTER, the attack on Lili has strong erotic overtones; however, it is clear that any sexual pleasure is derived solely by the Countess.

It would be a gross oversight not to mention this film's quiet, understated, but effective

and beautiful background music. According to music expert Sam Sherman, the uncredited score was composed by Heinz Roemheld. Consisting of 27 cues, it opens with a majestic four-note theme for the Countess, followed by a passage evoking both tragic and regal emotions. The most creative use of music comes when the score is interwoven with Zaleska's piano rendering of Chopin's *Nocturne No. 3*, during which she describes the normal life she expects to lead. As Sandor's black musings throw a blanket of doom over her hopes, the orchestra, previously complementing the piano piece, rises above it until Zaleska cries, "Stop!"—at which point the crescendo of music halts abruptly. Many of the score's passages were picked up for use in the studio's Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers serials. The fact that screen credit was not giv-



Gloria Holden as DRACULA'S DAUGHTER.

Richard Scrivani is a regular contributor to *Scarlet Street*. He is a videotape engineer at the National Broadcasting Company in New York City.

Continued on page 100

the NEWS HOUND



The Hound's in his Dartmoor den, licking his wounds following a close encounter with a crosstown bus (driven, no doubt, by a vengeful Baskerville). Despite the damage, your Snarling Scribe is back on the beat to bring you more creepy coming attractions.

Now arriving at your local cinemas... **CANDYMAN** stars Virginia Madsen as a grad student who bones up on urban myths and rattles the cage of a terrifying living legend. It's based on Clive Barker's short story "The Forbidden"... Nobody's laughing when escaped psycho DR. GIGGLIES comes to town. Larry Drake of **L.A. LAW** and **DARKMAN** stars... Suburban swingers Kevin Kline and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio should have stood in bed (their own) to avoid the violent consequences in Alan J. Pakula's thriller **CONSENTING ADULTS**... L.A. cop Andy Garcia is ordered onto the trail of a Northern California serial killer in **JENNIER EIGHT**... World War Two test pilot Mel Gibson returns to the world of the warmblooded after a 50-year deep freeze in **FOREVER YOUNG** (a.k.a. **THE REST OF DANIEL**). Jamie Lee Curtis co-stars.

More mystery and mayhem is due in early 1993... Julian Sands plays a surgeon who prefers women with a little less meat on their bones—literally—in **BOXING HELENA**, written and directed by Jennifer Lynch (David's chip off the chopping block). Sherilyn Fenn is the leading lady who's a little light in the limb department... In director Adrian Lyne's new thriller, a Vegas high-roller makes an **INDECENT PROPOSAL** to Demi Moore and husband Woody Harrelson: a million bucks for one night with Demi. They shoulda said no, 'cause Demi prefers the gambler, who is played by Robert Redford... Mike Myers returns from **WAYNE'S WORLD** to make us hurl anew with **SO I MARRIED AN AXE MURDERER!** Scripters include Myers and Carrie Fisher... **MIND TWISTERS**, from sultan of schlock Fred Olen Ray, will feature 70s stars Telly Savalas, Richard Roundtree, and Robert (Count Yorga) Quarry... With a never-ending affection for Roman numerals and grisly homicides, producer Sean Cunningham will present **FRIDAY THE 13TH, PART IX**. The New Line Cinema release arrives sometime in MCMXCIII.

American remakes of import thrillers are all the rage, with Warner's **THE SPECIALIST**, based on Luc Besson's **LA FEMME NIKITA**, leading the pack. Bridget Fonda, Gabriel Byrne, and Anne Bancroft star; John Badham directs. Also coming soon is Dutch director George Sluizer's **THE VANISHING**, based on his own 1988 home-country hit **SPOORLOOS**. The cast includes Jeff Bridges, Kiefer Sutherland, and Nancy Travis. **THE KILLER**, which director Walter Hill has adapted from a wild Hong Kong bullet fest, will also be arriving in theaters soon, starring Richard Gere and Denzel Washington.

Steven Spielberg's dino-story **JURASSIC PARK** is finally before the cameras, with Sir Richard Attenborough, Sam Neill, Laura Dern, and Jeff Goldblum sharing the screen with a stegosaurus or two... Other films rolling at press time include Sam Arkoff's \$5 million remake of **I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF**; Roger Corman's **800 LEAGUES DOWN THE AMAZON**, a Peruvian spin on Jules Verne with Barry Bostwick; and Richard Donner's Louisiana-based Warner Bros. production of Anne Rice's **THE WITCHING HOUR**.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, announced by Warner for a January production start, may have hit another unexpected trap door. Andrew Lloyd Webber, in his zeal to retain tight control, seems to be scaring away potential directors, who are jumping ship for more-firmly-scheduled projects. Meanwhile, Lloyd Webber's next stage extravaganza, **SUNSET BOULEVARD**, is rapidly taking shape, with Christopher Hampton (**DANGEROUS LIAISONS**) adapting Billy Wilder's screen story and Don Black providing the lyrics. The rumor mill names Glenn Close, Patti Lupone, and Meryl Streep as contenders for the Norma Desmond role. Angela Lansbury turned it down.

In other theatrical news, Broadway will soon be haunted by Stephen Mallatrat's superbly scary play **THE WOMAN IN BLACK**, being brought to New York by Robin Herford, director of the long-running London production. Previews begin at the Music Box Theatre on October 16th; opening night is October 29th.

Moving to small-screen news... **MAIGRET** is beginning its Stateside six-episode run on PBS's **MYSTERY!** series, with Michael Gambon (**THE SING-**

ING DETECTIVE) as Georges Simenon's Parisian Chief Inspector... The Sci-Fi Channel, a new basic-cable service from USA networks, has begun its telecasts with a vintage roster of reruns in its line-up, including **NIGHT GALLERY**, **KOLCHAK**, **ONE STEP BEYOND**, and **DARK SHADOWS** (the original and the revival). If you're not receiving The Sci-Fi Channel, call your local cable company and harass them.

Those of you who didn't get enough Buffy this summer have reason to hope—plans for **BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER: THE SERIES** are being discussed at Sandollar TV productions. Stake tuned.

A clutch of horror classics are available for the first time on home video this season: MGM is offering Karloff's **MASK OF FU MANCHU**, plus Lorre's **MAD LOVE** and **THE BEAST WITH FIVE FINGERS**, for under \$20 each. Even more tantalizing are MCA's new releases in its \$14.95 Universal Classics collection: **HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN**, **DRACULA'S DAUGHTER**, **WEREWOLF OF LONDON**, **THE MUMMY'S HAND**, and the long-unseen 1931 Spanish version of **DRACULA**, filmed concurrently with the Lugosi version. Other first time releases from MCA include **THE UNINVITED**, **BRIDES OF DRACULA**, and **MAN OF A THOUSAND FACES**. New offerings from Paramount's Gateway collection (at EP recording speed) include Vadim's **BLOOD AND ROSES**, the Cushing/Lee thriller **THE SKULL**, and Hammer's **FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL**. Beware: The last-named clocks in at four minutes under its original 93-minute running time.

Newer titles being released to the rental racks in October include the smash thriller **BASIC INSTINCT**; the Native American murder mystery **THUNDERHEART**; and **BATMAN RETURNS**, which will be available in a package with the 1989 original for \$45.00, or all by itself for \$24.98. November will bring **ALIEN 3** to the video stores, and in December we'll finally be gifted with the live-action Bullwinkle spinoff, **BORIS AND NATASHA**, starring Dave Thomas and Sally Kellerman.

Until necks time, Happy Howldays from...



The News Hound

Research assistance provided by Kevin G. Shinnick.

Former Wild Child Part Two

an interview with

JOHN MOULDER-BROWN

by Jim Knüsch

Last issue, John Moulder-Brown told us all about the beginnings of his career, from his 1959 film debut in *ROOM AT THE TOP* to his sole visit to the Hammer House of Horrors for 1971's *VAMPIRE CIRCUS*. A year before joining the big top, though, the talented young actor had been playing in quite a different domicile...

SS: In addition to Mike in 1970's *DEEP END*, you played the boy in *THE HOUSE THAT SCREAMED*. Have you a special talent for playing sexually perverse adolescents? Did you carry that talent into...

JMB: Into my private life? (Laughs)

SS: ...into your adult roles?

JMB: That Luis in *THE HOUSE THAT SCREAMED*, he was a character, with the mother played by Lilli Palmer. That's the film I was doing when I met Maximilian Schell again in Madrid. It made more money in Spain than *GONE WITH THE WIND*. They were literally queuing up 'round blocks to see it. It was done by the Spanish director who is the Hitchcock of Spain. He had gained his reputation through horror stories on television. Ibáñez Serrador. He was a very strange character.

SS: *THE HOUSE THAT SCREAMED* is thought, by some, to be a stylish, unappreciated classic of Gothic horror, and, by others, to be trash.

JMB: I think beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Certainly at the time, as far as Spanish filmmaking was concerned, it was moving ahead in leaps and bounds. I think that's why it was such a success—partially because of the sexual repression in Spain during the Franco regime, and partially because of the horror aspect of it. It's a very formula film as one sees it now. You have your possible suspects, the red herrings, and it is the least likely suspect of all who is the perpetrator of the dastardly deeds. I loved playing the character. Any form of madness, or anything out of the norm is wonderful to play and not at all difficult.

SS: Which brings us back to our question: Have you carried that talent into your adult roles?

JMB: I suppose there's an element of everyone that's slightly unhinged, or can become unhinged in different situations. It's something I can easily tap into.

SS: You wouldn't want to be typecast as this sort of character?

JMB: No. Typecasting is against all actors; no one would want to be typecast. It's great to experiment; within every unhinged character there is a different element in being unhinged. Another mad character I played was Prince Otto in *LUDWIG*; again, he was completely mad at the end of the film, having been sent off to the wars and having had a certain amount of inbreeding. He went completely bats.



LEFT to RIGHT: John Moulder-Brown at age six, at 23 in Granada's *VICTORIAN SCANDALS*, and now.

When they assassinated Ludwig, Otto became the figurehead on the throne of Bavaria. He was a completely mad character and great fun to play. Wonderful fun. I think everyone is unhinged.

SS: Did *THE HOUSE THAT SCREAMED* live up to expectations?

JMB: I thought it was slightly limited, but I can't quite put my finger on why. Maybe it was my own portrayal of the character. One's involvement in a film is oneself; therefore one scans the film in relation to one's own character. *THE HOUSE THAT SCREAMED* was made so long ago, within all the constraints of Spanish cinema, but I think it fulfilled everything it possibly could.

SS: Tell us, what was it like working with Lilli Palmer?

JMB: Lilli Palmer was marvelous, very elegant, very charming. A movie star, playing the movie star. She had enormous charm and was wonderful in the film; she was absolutely perfect casting. The communication that we had was very civil and polite, and complimentary from her in an encouraging way. I was only 15 at the time. I've been extremely lucky in my career in that the people I've worked with have been very helpful. That, in a way, is the great blessing of anything I've done. It counts for a hell of a lot.

SS: Was it difficult working

with the French and Spanish actors? Were there difficulties in communication?

JMB: Well, you'd have Spanish actors speaking their lines in Spanish, and you'd be speaking in English, but that's not especially difficult.

SS: Tell us about the director, Narciso Ibáñez Serrador.

JMB: Ah! Serrador.

SS: How did he work with his actors?

JMB: Very intensely, with a very closed atmosphere, within which he found inspiration and created the atmosphere of the film. Intricate detail. Very intricate detail. A thing that a lot of Continental filmmakers have is that the composition of their frames is terribly important. He had it worked out before we went anywhere near the film, which the genre dictates, because it's a matter of timing. He had a very clear picture in his mind's eye of exactly what he wanted. We worked through an interpreter; he didn't speak that much English. We would talk in a close, one-to-one atmosphere, and the interpreter was a "voice off" as it were.

SS: Did you find it easier toward the end of the production? Did the interpreter become just a little less important?

JMB: Yes, I believe that's very true. Funny, Serrador was an actor himself, and that's wonderful to watch. Very often when a director cannot communicate through words he'll do a caricature, and an actor takes that caricature and tones it down into a personality.

SS: Probably the best-known director with whom you've worked is Luchino Visconti on *LUDWIG*. What was it like?

JMB: Again, there was very little spoken communication between us. I think he was at the end of a very arduous schedule and very fatigued. A lot of his direction was conveyed through other people; he would sit within these vast sets and convey his messages to the actors, to the technical staff, to the camera staff, through various minions who would run around delivering these messages. The mad scene was much more intimate; there was a lot more communication going on between us. I think he was very fatigued and it might have precipitated his illness and death. The wonderful thing about Visconti's filming, again, was the unobtrusiveness of the cameras. He would film with three cameras, so he'd get his master, his medium, and his close-ups virtually within one take. It's a marvelous editing technique if you have the budget to allow you to do it. And it's also marvelous for the actors.

SS: Helmut Berger played King Ludwig. Was Berger, in your opinion, a good choice for the role?

JMB: I think he was an excellent choice. Again, it was one of those things, as with Anthony Corlan, where I'd seen Helmut in *THE DAMNED* and was overwhelmed by his performance and by the way he looked. I thought he was an extraordinary-looking man.

SS: How were you cast in *LUDWIG*?





PREVIOUS PAGE: Theresa (Cristina Galbo) bids farewell to Luis (John Moulder-Brown), but the boy has other ideas: namely, killing her and using a body part or two to build his own girl in the attic. Just one of the many fun rooms in *THE HOUSE THAT SCREAMED* (1970). **LEFT:** Maximilian Schell and John Moulder-Brown in 1970's *FIRST LOVE*, directed by Schell. **RIGHT:** In yet another portrayal of Youth Gone Wild, John Moulder-Brown was mad Prince Otto, younger brother of mad King LUDWIG, in the 1973 Luchino Visconti film.

JMB: I was meant to be doing *THE TRIPLE ECHO*, with Glenda Jackson and Oliver Reed, but just before filming started I got run over and broke my leg. As a result, I couldn't do that film. Dominique Sanda, who had starred with me in *FIRST LOVE*, did *GARDEN OF THE FINZI-CONTINIS* with Helmut, and when they were looking for an actor to play Ludwig's brother, she suggested me to him. Helmut in turn suggested me to Visconti, and they accepted me sight unseen. I didn't meet Visconti; I didn't audition for it; I didn't read for it or do a screen test. I even had a broken leg when they offered me the part; I was in plaster. The uncle of the girl I'd been living with was the limb-fitting specialist at Rohampton Hospital in England, which is the limb-fitting center of the world. I had missed *THE TRIPLE ECHO*, and it looked as if I was going to miss the Visconti film, but, through the good fortune of her connection with her limb fitting uncle, they got me out of plaster and created a contraption that fit into the heel of my shoe and supported my leg. I could therefore take the plaster off a month in advance and walk, with a stick and a slight limp, during the filming of *LUDWIG*.

SS: That's quite a story.

JMB: But I think Helmut is a wonderful actor. It was a very arduous program for him; they were filming for months on end. It was a massive part. He looked like Ludwig, and I think he was magnificent in the part. I think he's—maybe—a little bit lost since Visconti's death, but Helmut was an ideal actor for that particular moment in the cinema and for that particular director.

SS: He has a reputation for temperament and outrageous behavior. Was this at all evident during the filming of *LUDWIG*?

JMB: Certainly not during the course of filming. It was a very tough schedule; I don't think there was room for any temperament. I don't think he would have allowed himself temperament with Visconti, anyway. Visconti was a patriarchal figure; I mean, you felt this grand, great man was there. Helmut was looked after very well, which is very necessary when you're playing that kind of part. He was, at all times, charming to me. We went out together. The only outrageous behavior I ever witnessed was Helmut leaving nightclubs and screaming at photographers—the paparazzi. He was an absolute professional. I think, in a way, the kind of stuff he's done since has been so undemanding that he's had to spice things up with a bit of temperament.

SS: You played Ludwig's brother, Prince Otto. Compared to Ludwig, did you find the role rather meatless?

JMB: A lot of the film was cut to pieces. It was cut down from four to two hours. As a consequence, a lot of my part disappeared in the cutting. It wasn't meatless to me at the time. The extras were gathered from all sorts of impoverished European aristocracy, so one spent a lot of time talking to these wonderful characters. They were bedecked in uniforms and jewelry and medals during the filming and, later, would get into old jeans and shirts to leave the studio. The whole of the filming of *LUDWIG* was truly fascinating.

SS: Did you find it a difficult transition from child to adult actor? Was there a period when it was hard to find work?

JMB: It wasn't difficult. Of course, I've never thought of myself as being an adult. I'm sure that one day I will be a grown-up, but it hasn't hit me yet. In terms of acting roles, I suppose I am now an adult and a grown-

up. But acting is the art of the child, really. It's the retaining of one's childhood; it's make-believe. It's allowing one's imagination to survive intact and to give it free wing.

SS: You appeared in Granada TV's *VICTORIAN SCANDALS*.

JMB: I did indeed!

SS: It never aired in the States.

JMB: Thank God!

SS: What was it, exactly?

JMB: *VICTORIAN SCANDALS* was a series of six programs made by Granada Television. Granada Television has an awful lot of money, and they have very good production values for their programs. They have money because they have a long-running soap series called *CORONATION STREET*, which has been running since my birth, if not before. *VICTORIAN SCANDALS* was a series of six different stories about true Victorian scandals. An actress called Maureen O'Brien starred with me. The story was about Wilfred Blunt, a young poet who went to work in the foreign office in Paris, and fell in love with the courtesan to the foreign minister. Courtesans were held very much in high regard. They weren't looked down on as prostitutes; they were protected and guarded by their benefactors and mentors. It was a great scandal in Blunt's life, the fact that this woman had been the courtesan of such a high-powered official in Paris.

SS: But you don't feel too strongly about the program?

JMB: I was terrible in it. I was very, very bad in it. Within every actor's career, there are one or two productions that stand out as real clangers. *VICTORIAN SCANDALS* was one of my real clangers. I didn't get to grips with it at all.

SS: Not you at your worst?



Water sports from John Moulder-Brown's first big splash in movies: *DEEP END* (1971). **ABOVE:** The boys at the baths dunk Mike (Moulder-Brown), who takes offense when they hint that the girl of his dreams sleeps around. **BELOW:** Mike makes underwater love to the nude poster of a girl who resembles his beloved Susan.

JMB: (Laughs) Well, me at the worst I would ever hope to be.

SS: In the Miss Marple film, *SLEEPING MURDER*, you were innocent of all wrongdoing. Did you find that a pleasant change, or is it more challenging to play the killer?

JMB: Funny enough, there's an enormous challenge in playing the innocent. It was a difficult production for me, in-

asmuch as I'd just come back from Israel, where I'd been filming *RUMPELSTILTSKIN* with Amy Irving, directed by David Irving, her brother, for Cannon. There were horses; there were swords; there were grounds splitting apart. I'd had a wonderful time in Israel and enjoyed the filming immensely, and I came back to do *SLEEPING MURDER*. It was a very sedate English setting. I found it diffi-

cult inasmuch as I kept wanting to spring up and draw my sword, and maybe fight away a few poltergeists. But, of course, all I had to do was pick up a cup of tea and have a sip, and look attentively at yet another actor giving a lot of information as to the plot. It was fun in a way, because the locations were beautiful and I had a lovely little red car. It was challenging inasmuch as I had to have a quality of still attentiveness. I met Jeremy Brett at a party not long after it had been shown, and he said, "I saw you in the Miss Marple thing, and I thought you were marvelous, 'cause you had nothing to do and you did it so well." The challenge was to invent something for the character to do in each scene, so that I wasn't just sitting there and listening. I would find something to do, whether it would be stroking a pussycat, whether it would be that my collar was tight, whether it would be that I was trying to light a cigarette and couldn't get it lit. I tried to put in pieces of business that didn't interrupt, but somehow formed a definite person.

SS: Was there any attempt to make Giles in *SLEEPING MURDER* a red herring?

JMB: None whatsoever on my part, and I don't think any intended by the author.

SS: Are you an Agatha Christie fan?

JMB: I adore Agatha Christie and I like watching actors grapple with the content of Agatha Christie. It's highly entertaining and great fun.

SS: What was it like working with Joan Hickson, who plays Miss Marple?

JMB: Lovely. Absolutely adorable. We flirted the whole time, and I couldn't help but think, if she had been maybe 40

years younger—she was 80 at the time we made *SLEEPING MURDER*—that I would have proposed marriage to her. Wonderful, delightful, eccentric character.

SS: Have you a favorite role or favorite motion picture?

JMB: I suppose my favorite role would be in *KING, QUEEN, KNAVE*, because of the offbeat madness of the character. I enjoy black comedy. My favorite film, in which I didn't appear, is *ENTER-TAINING MR. SLOANE* by Joe Orton. Marvelous film. There are so many elements to enjoying a film and it's not always because they're getting it right. Sometimes it's because you can see the process they're going through.

Jim Knäsch is a film historian and free-lance writer. He is a frequent contributor to Scarlet Street.



Photo courtesy of Danny Peary

JOHN MOULDER-BROWN

MEETS

MISS MARPLE IN...

SLEEPING MURDER

by SCOT D. RYERSSON

Cover her face; mine eyes dazzle: she died young.

—John Webster

It really is very dangerous to believe people. I never have for years.

—Jane Marple

In the midst of World War II, renowned mystery author Agatha Christie wrote two novels which were intended to be the final deductive cases for her legendary creations Monsieur Hercule Poirot, Belgian detective extraordinaire, and Miss Jane Marple, spinster sleuth par excellence.

In her autobiography, published posthumously in 1977, the author explained:

I had written an extra two books during the first years of the war. This was in anticipation of my being killed in the raids. . . one was for Rosalind [Christie's daughter] which I wrote first—a book with Hercule Poirot in it—and the other was for Max [Christie's husband] with Miss Marple in it. Those two books, when written, were put in the vaults of a bank. . . they were, I gather, heavily insured against destruction. "It will cheer you up," I explained to them both, "when you come back from the funeral, or memorial service, to think that you have got a couple of books, one belonging to each of you!" They said they would rather have me, and I said: "I should hope so, indeed!" And we all laughed a good deal.

The novels remained in the bank vault until 30 years later, when in 1975 Dame Agatha's health began to fail and it became clear that she would be unable to produce her yearly "Christie for Christmas." The family decided that it was time for the Poirot book, *Curtain*, to be published.

On January 12, 1976, at age 85, Agatha Christie died peacefully at her home in Wallingford, England. October of the same year saw the publication of the author's last mystery and Miss Marple's final case: *Sleeping Murder*. The book was an enormous success; the paperback rights alone went for almost one million dollars.

The novel began its literary life in one of Dame Agatha's workbooks as "Cover Her Face," a quote taken from John

Scot D. Ryerson is an award-winning illustrator who has lived and worked in Sydney, Los Angeles, London, and Toronto. He currently resides in the New York area and is a devout Christieophile.



A photos © BBC

Giles and Gwenda Reed have placed a personal ad that may very well bring a murderer to their door, a fact not lost on the fastidious Miss Jane Marple (Joan Hickson). "Let sleeping murder lie," the wise old spinster warns.

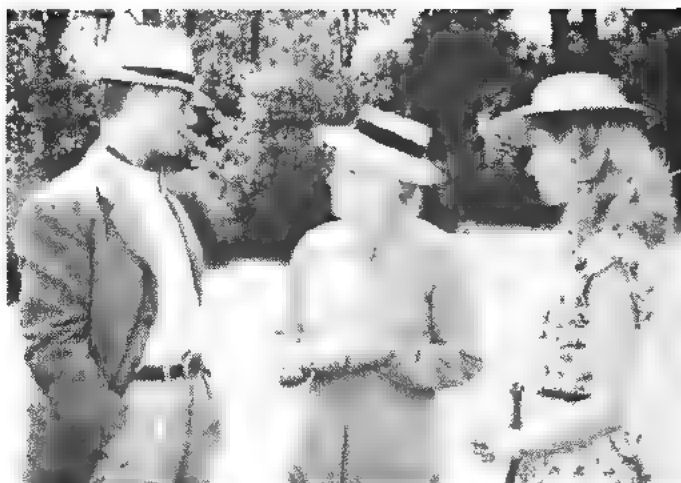
Webster's 1623 Jacobean tragedy, *THE DUCHESS OF MALFI*. The novel's published title comes from some lines spoken by Miss Marple's physician in the book: "Well, I'll tell you. I'd let sleeping murder lie—that's what I'd do. Messing about with murder is dangerous. It could be very dangerous."

And sleeping murder does prove very dangerous for Gwenda and Giles Reed, a newlywed couple from New Zealand who have just moved to the English coast and into their new home: a grand Victorian manse with lush gardens that roll down to meet the sea. The house seems oddly familiar to Gwenda. It's almost as though she's lived there before. . . or is it only a case of déjà vu? Then, suddenly, poor Gwenda has the terrifying vision of a beautiful blonde woman lying sprawled across the floor of the front hall. The woman is dead—blue-faced and strangled.

Against Miss Marple's advice to leave well enough alone, the naive couple undertake the solution of this macabre puzzle. As the Reeds begin to uncover the evil passions and seething jealousies behind this long-forgotten homicide, they realize too late that, even after two decades, someone is still willing to kill to keep it hidden.

In 1987, BBC-TV filmed this bizarre tale of murder in retrospect for inclusion in their series *AGATHA CHRISTIE'S MISS MARPLE*, starring Joan Hickson. As dramatized by Ken Taylor and directed by John Davies, Christie's quietly-told mystery became an eerie, dark, foreboding telefilm, one that expertly plays upon a person's phobia of being left alone in a strange house for the night.

SLEEPING MURDER stars British actress Geraldine Alexander as the spunky Gwenda Reed. Ms. Alexander strikes a perfect bal-



LEFT: Dr. Kennedy and Miss Marple (Frederick Treves and Joan Hickson) take a quiet stroll in the garden. Several feet below their feet is the body of Kennedy's long-lost sister. **RIGHT:** Miss Marple wraps up the case for Giles and Gwenda Reed. Pictured: John Moulder-Brown, Joan Hickson, and Geraldine Alexander.

ance between the young newlywed's anxiety and her bravery, and also speaks in an admirable New Zealand accent. As her husband Giles, former child star and Hammer horror actor John Moulder Brown gives a very believable and subtle performance as a normal, everyday guy who is unexpectedly faced with a body buried beneath his garden steps. (One supposes that Moulder-Brown's work in 1971's *THE HOUSE THAT SCREAMED* and 1972's *VAMPIRE CIRCUS* would have prepared him for just such an occurrence.) The fine cast is rounded out by Frederick Treves as the dead girl's brother, who assists the couple in unearthing their home's deadly secret.


Still, as in all Miss Marple BBC adaptations, *SLEEPING MURDER*'s core is the impeccable performance of character actress Joan Hickson as Christie's active busybody turned amateur detective. Miss Hickson has been described by the British press as

being "possibly the oldest actress ever to take the leading role in a TV series," a distinction the actress has most definitely earned. The first Miss Marple telefilm aired in 1984, when Miss Hickson was 78. This year, at age 86, the genteel English lady is preparing to film *THE MIRROR CRACK'D*, the last of Christie's Marple novels left unfilmed.

In his review of the BBC series in the British newspaper, the *Western Mail*, critic Albert Watson wrote in admiration, "Miss Marple, one of the most popular sleuths in detective fiction, is proof positive that heroes don't have to be male, young, and athletic."

Of the character, Miss Hickson modestly commented, "It is so lovely to play a character who is regarded all over the world with such affection." Now, so is Miss Hickson herself.





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Our Man on Baker Street

Nothin' Like a Dame

The grand old dame moves over for a younger, sexier, streetwise babe. Joan Hickson, who, amazingly, is 86 this year, is hanging up her knitting wool this autumn after she finishes filming her final Miss Marple mystery: *THE MIRROR CRACK'D*. "I feel very sad," she said, "but one can't go on forever playing the same part. I've made so many friends and have especially loved working with David Horovitch, who plays Inspector Slack."

Hickson has had a tremendous career in films, theatre, and television, appearing with Basil Rathbone in *LOVE FROM A STRANGER* (1938) and with Margaret Rutherford playing Miss Marple in *MURDER SHE SAID* (1961), a version of Agatha Christie's 4.50 from *Paddington*. With her performances in the excellent BBC Marple series, she has proved to be the definitive spinster sleuth. The story goes that Hickson once met Agatha Christie, who told her that one day she would like to see her play Miss Marple. It's a great pity that the Queen of Crime never saw the splendid fulfillment of her wishes.

As Miss Marple closes her casebook, ITV are planning a new series of sleuthing shows featuring Anna Lee—she's the streetwise babe mentioned earlier. Nick Elliot, controller of drama at London Weekend Television, which is making the series, said, "She is feisty, lippy, and always getting herself into trouble." He sees Anna as the first in a new breed of television detectives. "We want to get away from the male middle-aged heroes, such as Inspector Morse, Wexford, and Sherlock Holmes. Morse never has sex, but Anna Lee does—although it does create complications for her."

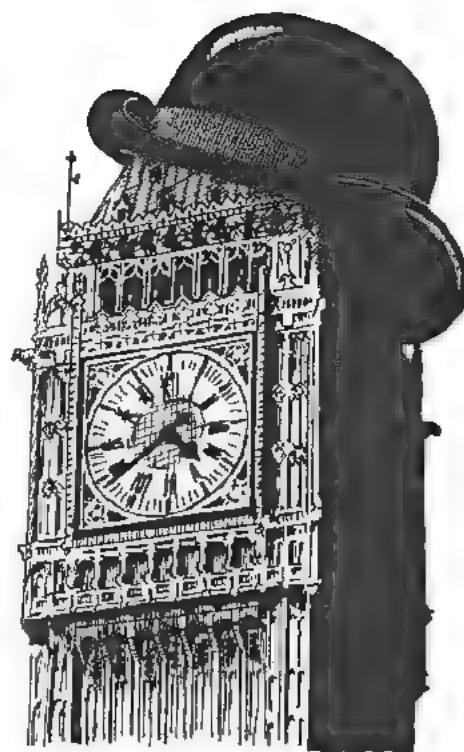
Story lines will deal with drugs, incest, and domestic violence. "It's going to be a very realistic series. I think modern women will be able to identify with her. She has split ends and dirty hair, just like any other woman." (Miss Marple would hardly agree!)

The series is adapted from the Liza Cody novels by scriptwriter Andrew Davies and stars 31-year-old Imogen Stubbs. Personally, I can't wait for the series. I'm a great fan of the novels featuring Anna Lee, who is a kind of Anglicized V.I. Warshawski.

A two-hour pilot for the £5-million series will be shown in Britain at the end of the year, about the same time that Miss Marple takes her final bow.

From Little Acorns Grow...

Every two years, ITV in Britain hold a 48-hour fundraising event: the Telethon. This year in June they came up with the idea of presenting a mystery, shown in segments over the 48 hours, with each segment featuring a television detective. There was Scottish detective Taggart, Dutch sleuth Van Der Valk, the English Inspector Wexford, and (of course) dear old Sherlock, who appeared in the first episode of *THE FOUR OAKS MYSTERY*. I cannot begin to unravel the complications of the whole puzzle, but the Holmes section was fascinating, featuring Brett and Hardwick along with veteran actress Phyllis Calvert as Holmes' imperious godmother, Lady Cordelia. (I never knew

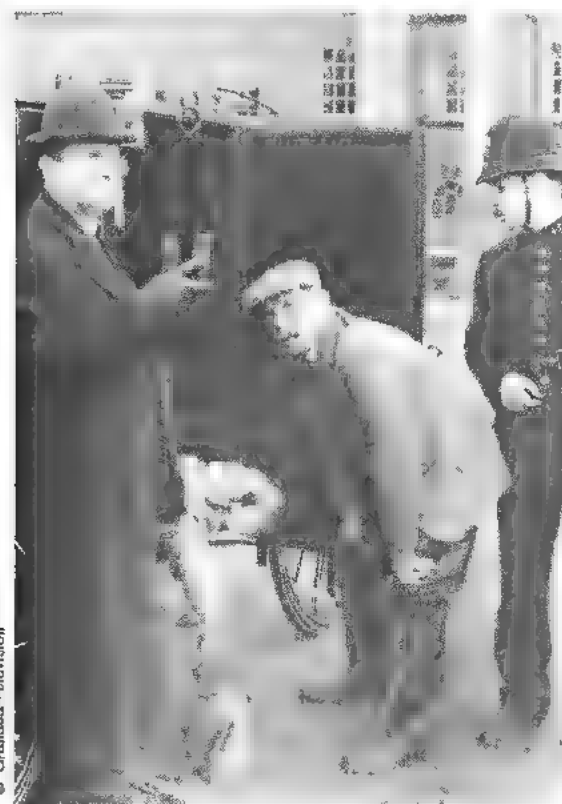


Holmes had aristocratic connections.) It was filmed in the usual rich Granada style and, as it is very unlikely that it will be shown in the States, video copies no doubt will become collector's items.

Holmes and Watson are on a fishing holiday and staying with Lady Cordelia at Great Tunlow Hall when they are called in to help with a double murder, the solution of which lies buried in the past and involves a treasure of Roman jewels. Holmes is intrigued by a dying reference to four oaks, but before he is able to solve the mystery he is called away on another matter: one, Watson informs us, leading to a fatal appointment above a waterfall in Switzerland. The enigma is left for the next detective to unravel.

Now to Sherlock Holmes proper: Filming began at the start of September on *THE NOBLE BACHELOR*, the second of the two-hour specials Granada are making this year. You will be pleased to know that Rosalie Williams (Mrs. Hudson) is back in the cast, along with Simon Williams as Lord St. Simon (the noble bachelor himself), Paris Jefferson as Henrietta (not Hattie) Doran, and Joanna McCallum as Flora Miller. Anna Calder Marshall also stars as Helena/Agnes Nortcote. The strangest casting, however, is that of Geoffrey Beavers as Inspector Lestrade! Where is dear old Colin Jeavons? This I must investigate. Hopefully by the next issue I'll know more, and there will be a full location report.

—David Stuart Davies



Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson (Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke) investigate *THE FOUR OAKS MYSTERY*—or at least 10 minutes of it.



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BLOOD OF DRACULA

Answering the call from one of their national distributors to deliver an all-horror blockbuster double bill in time for the '57 Thanksgiving/Christmas holidays, AIP head honchos James H. Nicholson and Samuel Z. Arkoff came up with not one but two spinoffs of their most recent success, *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF*: namely, *I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN* and *BLOOD OF DRACULA*.

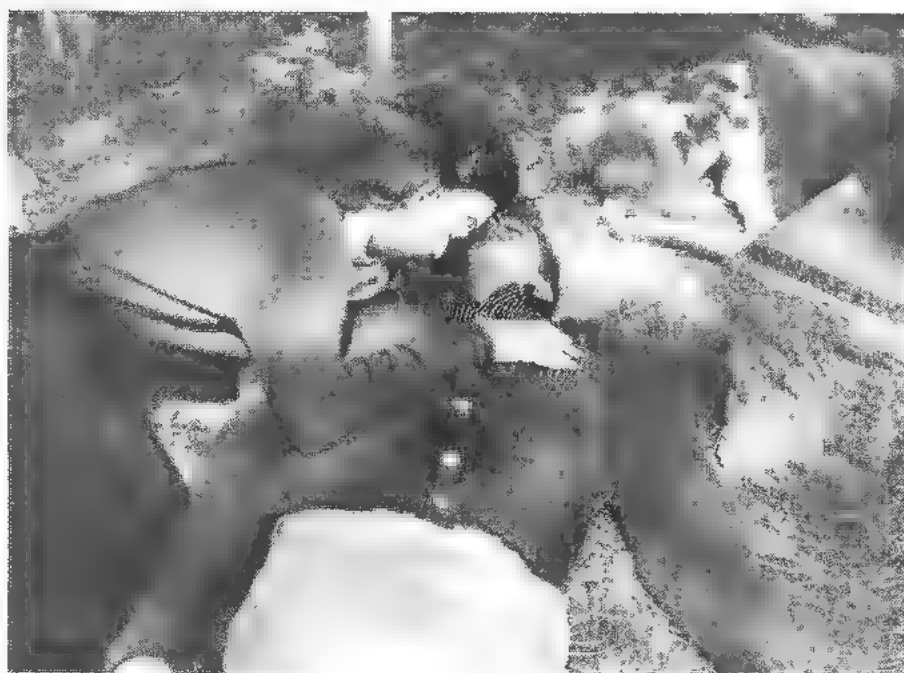
Concocted by *TEENAGE WEREWOLF* producer Herman Cohen—who, in the wake of the recently-announced remake, engaged in a heated controversy with Sam Arkoff over credit for the Michael Landon starrer, an honor they probably could have cared less about 35 years ago—*BLOOD OF DRACULA* offers a new and interesting slant on Cohen's quickly-becoming-familiar formula: The protagonists are both female. As for the mythic Transylvanian of the title, except for some lip service paid to the dark powers of vampirism, the Count is nowhere to be found, making it painfully obvious that Cohen and AIP were interested only in notching the name of one more Famous Monster on their bedposts.

More than any other production company, American International appealed directly to the youth market with sensational themes, attractive young casts, and liberal doses of rock 'n' roll. *BLOOD OF DRACULA* illustrates handily their success formula with the Clearasil crowd: The average teenager is depicted as fun-loving, often

misunderstood, occasionally victimized, and almost always sympathetic. At best, the over-18 set (particularly parents) are portrayed as unyielding, uptight moralists. Cohen went a step farther. In *BLOOD OF DRACULA*, as well as in *TEENAGE WEREWOLF*, *TEENAGE FRANKEN*

STEIN, *HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER* (1958), *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM* (1959), and *BLACK ZOO* (1963), adults use the young and the innocent as pawns in their lethal (and often mindless) schemes.

Shipped off to an exclusive girls' school by her insensitive father and his hot young wife, emotionally disturbed Nancy Perkins (Sandra Harrison) falls under the



Sandra Harrison administers the hickie from hell to yet another college boy in 1957's BLOOD OF DRACULA.

evil influence of Miss Branding (Louise Lewis), a science teacher who spends her time away from the classroom immersed in scientific investigation. For years, Miss Branding has been searching for a "special kind of girl" to help her prove her theories: "I can demonstrate that there's a power strong enough to destroy the world buried within each of us, if only we can unleash it." Branding concludes that, if she can prove her preposterous theory to the governments of the world, destructive weapons would be immediately dismantled. With a population of potential human A-bombs walking about, they'd be obsolete.

Hypnotizing Nancy with the aid of a mysterious amulet she discovered in the Carpathians, Miss Branding turns the teenager into a fanged, demonic-looking creature who leaves behind a string of blood-drained corpses. (A verdict of justifiable homicide can be made in the case of singer Jerry Blaine, who wrote the lyrics for the song "Puppy Love" as well as *TEENAGE WEREWOLF*'s equally inane "Eeny, Meeny, Miney, Mo.")

After nearly killing her Joe College boyfriend, Nancy comes to her senses and

confronts her ruthless mentor. Miss Branding is unfazed, "You'll be proud of the part you played in serving mankind," she promises. Unconvinced, Nancy changes into the creature of the amulet once again and strangles her shocked teacher. Somehow, Nancy manages to get herself staked by a rod protruding conveniently from a section of wood.

Time has dealt kindly with many of AIP's black-and-white shockers of the 50s. In certain respects, they stand up better today than the over-touted Roger Corman Poe adaptations of the following decade. By no means on the same level as Corman's early low-budget films for AIP, *BLOOD OF DRACULA* nevertheless has its moments. As in *TEENAGE WEREWOLF*, an old Transylvanian legend is given an atomic-age spin, with curiously intriguing results. Director Herbert L. Strock follows Gene Fowler, Jr.'s *WEREWOLF* example by not revealing the monster until after the first murder; the dark, foreboding atmosphere he sustains is made even greyer by Paul Dunlap's sullen score. On the debit side are some endless police-investigation scenes, a favorite de-

vice of Cohen and his screenwriters to pad the running times of their pictures.

In roles "Ralph Thornton" (a pseudonym for Cohen and Aben Kandel) re-tailored from the Michael Landon/Whit Bissell characters in the *WEREWOLF* script, Sandra Harrison and Louise Lewis are efficient enough. After years of playing housewives and authority figures, Lewis (wife of Robert H. Harris, the crazed makeup artist of *HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER*) at last gets a part she can sink her teeth into. The actress brings the same cold-hearted detachment and smug single-mindedness to the role that Bissell brought to his mad-doctor portrayals.

Although the drecky transformation lap dissolves are just as laughable here as they were in *TEENAGE WEREWOLF*, makeup man Philip Scheer's concept of a teenage she-devil is something of an improvement over his pie-in-the-face makeup for *TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN*.

BLOOD OF DRACULA neatly encapsulates the recurring themes and images of those now-classic Herman Cohen films for AIP, and, as such, is worth a look.

John Brunas

THE VAMPIRE'S GHOST

In the mid-40s, when the second horror film cycle was petering out, writers at nearly all the studios were beginning to run low on inspiration. The classic monsters had been squeezed dry of practically all their screen potential, and variations on their plots were difficult to dream up. Universal hoped that a change of locale would be enough to dispel the heavy air of déjà vu. From the ancient tombs of Egypt they transplanted the Mummy (Lon Chaney, Jr.), first to a small town in Massachusetts (in 1942's *THE MUMMY'S TOMB*) and later to the swamps of Louisiana (1944's *THE MUMMY'S CURSE*). Dracula, too, packed his bags: The Count (Chaney again) took up residence in the Deep South in *SON OF DRACULA* (1943). The idea of relocating these Old World bogeymen to our own backyards seemed sound; the results were mixed.

Another globe-trotting ghoul was the protagonist of Republic's *THE VAMPIRE'S GHOST* (1945), written by up-and-coming Leigh Brackett (1946's *THE BIG SLEEP*, 1959's *RIO BRAVO*, and 1980's *THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK*). Instead of placing their vampire in its usual European haunts, Brackett and co-writer John K. Butler set their story in an African village, where the monster chooses its victims from among the residents. In Universal's Dracula movies, it was the Transylvanian peasantry who believed in vampires, warding them off with

crucifix and wolfsbane, much to the amusement of skeptical tourists; in *VAMPIRE'S GHOST*, it's the jungle tribesmen of the Dark Continent who are up on vampire lore, the white bwana who refuses to accept the supernatural creature.

The plantation town of Bakunda is plagued by a series of killings, the work of Webb Fallon (played by John Abbott), an unconventional vampire who operates a waterfront dive and roams about freely in daylight. Rubber-plantation official Roy (Charles Gordon) falls under Fallon's spell, and Roy's fiancée, Julie Vance (Peggy Stewart), is next on the vampire's hit list. In the climax, the recovered Roy; a missionary, Father Gilchrist (Grant Withers); and the angry natives join forces to run the vampire to earth.

It seems unkind, when the charge of familiarity is leveled against so many "B" movies, to come down on *THE VAMPIRE'S GHOST*. *GHOST*'s mix of vampire, voodoo, and jungle-film elements is offbeat enough to be almost appealing, but the film generates so few thrills and so little atmosphere that, even at a scant 59 minutes, it nearly succeeds in wearing out its welcome. The role of vampire Fallon requires an actor with considerable physical presence, and the wispy Abbott is distinctly unsuited; everyone else in the film looks as though they'd be more at home in a Western or serial. The mood best evoked



by *THE VAMPIRE'S GHOST* is one of heat and oppression.

Universal's *CURSE OF THE UNDEAD* (1959), a slightly similar, much better film, starred Michael Pate as a vampire who earns a living as a hired gun in the Old West. Like Webb Fallon, Pate's Drake Robey becomes a vampire as the result of a curse, frequents a saloon, tangles with secondary (human) characters, moves about in broad daylight, lusts after the leading lady (Kathleen Crowley), and contends with a preacher (Eric Fleming) dedicated to his destruction. One of Universal's cheapest-looking 50s chillers, *UNDEAD* nevertheless rates points for its novel plotting and a strong performance by Pate. For all its faults, it's still probably the best-ever horror/Western, a hybrid genre doomed from the start.

—Tom Weaver

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HOUSE OF DRACULA

In 1945, Universal Studios brought its top three monsters together for the last time in a straight horror film. The previous year's *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* had seen Count Dracula (John Carradine) caught in the sunlight as he attempted to reach his coffin, the Wolf Man (Lon Chaney) shot with a silver bullet, and Frankenstein's Monster (Glenn Strange) perishing in a quicksand bog with the evil Dr. Niemann (Boris Karloff). Possibly due to the absence of master storyteller Curt Siodmak, who always found inventive ways to resurrect our favorite fiends, Dracula and the Wolf Man were back the next year in perfect working order with no attempt to clue us in on how or why.

The story opens with Dracula (Carradine) calling on the famous Dr. Edelmann (Onslow Stevens), a kindhearted scientist known for helping those in dire need. The Count asks the doctor to cure him of his bloodsucking habit. Seeing it as a challenge to medical science, Edelmann agrees, starting the vampire on a series of blood transfusions. Soon after, the doctor and his nurse Miliza (Martha O'Driscoll) respond to a call from Inspector Holtz (Lionel Atwill) and meet Lawrence Talbot (Chaney), who has been locked in the town prison at this own insistence. As the three watch, astonished, Talbot becomes a werewolf. Compassionately, Edelmann takes him into his care. However, Talbot attempts suicide by leaping off a cliff into the sea below. Edelmann enters an ocean-side cave and is attacked by the Wolf Man, who returns to human form just in time to prevent the good doctor's death. As the two explore the cave, they come upon the body of the Frankenstein Monster (Strange), washed there by the quicksand. Meanwhile, Dracula has decided to run off with Miliza rather than take the cure, and reverses the transfusion procedure, contaminating the doctor's blood with his own.

In a deftly executed sequence, Edelmann finds and destroys the vampire by exposing him to sunlight. Dracula is toast once more, but his curse lingers on: Edelmann becomes a bloodthirsty beast himself, savagely killing his servant, Seigfried (Ludwig Stossel). Talbot confronts the doctor, having seen him leave the grounds with Seigfried. Edelmann asks only for a little

Monster. Talbot pumps two bullets into Edelmann and pushes a rack of explosive chemicals over on the Monster, causing the final conflagration of the series (courtesy of footage from 1942's *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN*).

HOUSE OF DRACULA was produced by Paul Malvern and directed by Erle C. Kenton. Technically it's in a shoddier neighborhood than *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, but in a curious way it captures more of the shadowy atmosphere of earlier films, and wrings a better performance from Onslow Stevens than Karloff contributed to its predecessor. The Dracula sequence, isolated and rather tame and predictable in the previous film, carries more weight in this picture, the Count's influence affecting the story line long after his demise. Carradine has a much better seduction sequence here, weaving his spell over Martha O'Driscoll and transforming her piano playing into a creepy concerto to suit his mood. Though the film makes the most of its sparse production values, the shopworn characters have little new to offer. What saves the film from being a carbon copy of the first *HOUSE* are the sequences involving Stevens as the beast infected by the blood of Dracula. *HOUSE OF DRACULA*'s other great distinction is, of course, the curing of the Wolf Man. The Breen Office still kept a watchful eye on horror films, and by seeing to it that Talbot killed no one in this story, screenwriter Edward T. Lowe ensured the character's

right to an end to his suffering. (Naturally, he was back in full furry harness three years later for *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*.) By concentrating on aspects of the tale other than the routine prowls of its monsters, Universal ended its Frankenstein saga with a true touch of originality.

—Richard Scrivani



time so that he can operate on his hunch-backed nurse, Nina (Jane Adams). The doctor's efforts are doomed, however, as his bestial half takes over and he becomes obsessed with reanimating the Monster. Evidence leads the police to Edelmann, who strangles Nina and tosses her body into the cellar. The police break into the lab, only to be met by the rampaging

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Kiss of the Vampire

HORROR OF DRACULA (1958) introduced us to the Hammer vampire for the very first time: It wasn't until Christopher Lee leapt through the library door, fangs flashing and red eyes blazing, that we realized how far beyond the old Universal vampire they'd gone. Besides the gore and special effects, **HORROR** introduced us to blatant vampiric eroticism: "The terrifying lover who died—yet lived!"

In 1960, Hammer took the myths one step further with **THE BRIDES OF DRACULA**, wherein Baron Meinster (David Peel) incestuously bit his mother, who had kept him chained up in the family chateau following his corruption by decadent friends. Vampirism had become a sort of sexual perversion.

By the time Hammer's **KISS OF THE VAMPIRE** (1963) rolled around, vampirism was a social disease as well. An entire cult of wealthy, bored aristocrats had infected each other with the delights and tortures of the disease. One of those spirited away by the cultists was the daughter of the film's Van Helsing stand-in, Professor Zimmer (played by Clifford Evans).

The opening scene of **KISS** breaks several social and religious taboos, as Evans slams a pointed shovel through a coffin and into his daughter's heart; not only does he destroy her, but he also shatters traditional conventions by doing this at a funeral in front of a half-dozen witnesses (including the priest). The rest of **KISS** is equally subversive.

Written by John Elder (a.k.a. Anthony Hinds), **KISS OF THE VAMPIRE** owes as much to Hitchcock as it does to Terence Fisher, with a dash of Val Lewton added for spice. First-time

director Don Sharp had "cut his teeth" as a second-unit director on action and suspense films, and was the first director after Fisher to play around with Hammer's vampire myth. The result is another Hammer classic, at least in its original form (not the abortive TV version called **KISS OF EVIL**, so butchered that it's almost a different film). There's nary a wrong step in **KISS**, from its shocking opening to its bat-filled climax, with colorful atmosphere and characterization sandwiched in between.

Edward De Souza (Hammer's hero in 1962's **PHANTOM OF THE OPERA**) and Jennifer Daniel (Hammer's heroine in 1966's **THE REPTILE**) make a charming couple; the viewer roots for them all the way. Evans is an excellent substitute for Peter Cushing; his Professor Zimmer is a character with a real mystique, and his performance is one of the best things about the film.

The real star of the show, though, is Noel Willman as Dr. Ravna, head of the vampire cult. Suave, very much in the Dracula mold, yet with a touch of aloof decadence about him, Ravna mesmerizes not only the heroine, but the audience, too.

Alan Hume's cinematography is, if not as expressionistic as predecessor Jack Asher's, certainly beautiful to behold. The brief shot near the end, of Marianne (Daniel) wandering through the forest toward the chateau, is composed as if it were a classical painting, and Hume achieves a remarkable starkness in the opening graveyard sequence, as well.

KISS OF THE VAMPIRE is one of the more influential of Hammer's films; among other things, it inspired Roman Polanski's 1967 **DANCE OF THE VAMPIRES** (better known as **THE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS OR: PARDON ME, BUT YOUR TEETH ARE IN MY NECK**).

Now that **BRIDES OF DRACULA** is at last available on video, when will MCA release the uncut, original **KISS OF THE VAMPIRE**?

—Bruce G. Hallenbeck



Dr. Ravna (Noel Willman) and his vampire cult are ravished by bats. (The furry little critters were too shy to show up for this photo session.)

count yorga, vampire

Los Angeles Harbor, 1970. A casket is transferred from a steamship to a pickup truck. A disheveled man pays the shipping clerk and transports the coffin by truck through the streets of the city to a brooding mansion located high up in the surrounding hills.

This is the opening sequence of **COUNT YORGA, VAMPIRE** (1970). Although Dan Curtis' daytime soap opera,

DARK SHADOWS, was heating up the ratings, the U.S. had yet to challenge the vampire flicks emerging from Europe—and, in particular, from England's Hammer Films. American International Pictures acquired a soft-core porn movie made by Michael Macready (son of character actor George) and Bob Keljan. Sequences were re-edited and AIP unleashed **COUNT YORGA, VAMPIRE**, to an audi-

ence thirsting for new blood. With an initial investment of \$14,000, the film grossed millions. Here was a film that delivered the goods, no holds barred. It saved AIP from financial straits and spawned a sequel, **THE RETURN OF COUNT YORGA** (1971), and various vampire spin-offs.

Horror fans were in for a real surprise. Throughout **COUNT YORGA**, the audience is presented with characters and situ-

ations that bring an ever-increasing tension to the proceedings. The film's low budget actually serves to enhance the believability of both the performances and the atmosphere. **COUNT YORGA** also ends on a downbeat note: In a surprise twist, the hero, played by Roger Perry, is killed by his girlfriend. It is not unlikely that this shock ending was inspired by George Romero's **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** (1968).

Robert Quarry's Yorga emerges as the first American vampire to rival the popularity of Bela Lugosi's *Dracula*. Yorga is an utterly bestial creature with no redeeming qualities whatsoever. He is suave, intelligent, and in command of his environment. When Dr. Hayes (Perry) flashes a crucifix at him, Yorga shrugs and turns aside, stating matter-of-factly, "You really are naive." When the film's three heroes try to keep him up until dawn in order to destroy him, Yorga, with just a hint of sarcasm, exclaims, "It's such a surprise to see someone at your door at this late hour!"

The film contains scenes new to vampire movies: among them, Erica (Judith Lang) devouring her pet cat during her early vampiric stages, and the climactic slaughter of Dr. Hayes by Yorga's vampire brides. Additionally, some soft-core scenes are retained. One sequence depicts Yorga's two brides coupling and engaging in some "mouth-to-mouth" (or is it fang-to-fang?) as the camera lingers on the vampire's erotically-charged facial expressions. The home-video version restores deleted footage to both the devoured-cat scene and the seduction of Erica by Yorga (a scene that gave Hammer a run for its money in the dead-sex department). There exists a **COUNT YORGA** lobby card showing Donna's mother (vampire bride Marsha Jordan) snarling at another female vampire while clutching a chewed-up baby (which looks rather like a plastic doll). The scene depicted doesn't appear in either the theatrical or the video version. Late in the film, however, Dr. Hayes' mistress, Cleo (Julie Connors), mentions the baby having been found in a swamp.

The acting is above average for such a low-budget venture. Roger Perry brings strength and believability to Dr. Hayes. Michael Macready walks through his role as Michael; his father, George, narrates the opening of the film and laughs maniacally during the end credits. Movie fans will recognize a young Michael Murphy, later a stock player for director Robert Altman and substitute for Tony Roberts in Woody Allen's **MANHATTAN** (1979). As Erica, Judith Lang is the film's true stand out, giving an extremely sensual performance as her animalistic urges are brought to the fore under Yorga's vile influence.

The film has an unusual score by William Marx (son of Harpo). The instru-

ments present in the main theme are harp (natural.y), flute, cellos, and percussion. This theme recurs during Yorga's seduction of Erica. When Michael explores Yorga's basement, Marx resorts to an organ solo interspersed with percussion, creating a sound that can only be described as twigs snapping.

Hoping that lightning would strike twice, AIP signed Robert Quarry to a seven-picture deal and gave Bob Kelljan a bigger budget to make a sequel, **THE RETURN OF COUNT YORGA**. The result is a carbon copy of the original: Yorga uses his powers of hypnosis to gain control of the heroine, Cynthia (Mariette Hartley), while having her friends—or, in this case, family—destroyed in the process. The film also ends in the same manner as the original: In a surprise (?) twist, the heroine is unexpectedly killed by her friend.

This time out, Quarry plays Yorga like a love-sick school boy, fawning over the bland Cynthia. In the film's most embarrassing moment, Yorga seeks counsel from a witch (Corinne Conley) who resides conveniently in his basement, cauldron and all, and asks her for "Dear Abby" hints on wooing his intended. Never does Yorga reach the intensity of evil that he achieved in the original film; this sequence makes him look pathetic.

In contrast, **RETURN** opens brilliantly: As the sun sets, a young boy is seen playing with a ball in dense forest which, unnoticed by the child, is part of a graveyard. As the boy retrieves his ball, arms and hands shoot out of the ground in ecstatic anticipation of the night. When the boy stops to rest, he looks up to find vampire women slowly descending upon him as the screen fades to black. Sadly, it's all downhill from there.

Two stand-out bursts of humor do serve to lighten the proceedings: When Yorga shows up unexpectedly at the orphanage masquerade ball, Cynthia asks him, "How did you get here with the bridge out?" Yorga replies matter-of-factly, "I flew." When Yorga's manservant, Brudah (Edward Walsh), announces an unexpected visitor, his master is seen watching Hammer's **THE VAMPIRE LOVERS** (1970) on the television in his den. As Ingrid Pitt sinks her fangs into a



victim, Yorga looks up at Brudah and sighs, "It's a bore."

The acting, for the most part, is again above average. Mariette Hartley, fresh from her stint with Polaroid, tries to give her dull character some life; Roger Perry appears as yet another doctor (Baldwin), who suffers the same fate as his predecessor; George Macready hams it up as Professor Rightstar, a character who was mentioned, but never seen, in the first film, and Walter Brooke struggles to bring heroics to the comedic scenes. TV fans will recognize Craig T. Nelson in a very un-coach-like performance as a cop in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The Yorga series stopped here, but AIP in rapid succession released **BLACULA** (1972); **SCREAM, BLACULA**, **SCREAM** (1972); and Ray Danton's **THE DEATHMASTER** (1972), co-produced by Robert Quarry, who plays a Charles Manson like vampire guru! These films are terribly dated and retain interest only as time capsules of the 70s (Nehru jackets, love beads, incense, and so on). The Yorga films still hold up well; although the sequel received much more acclaim from critics and fans at the time, it's the original **COUNT YORGA, VAMPIRE** that remains the quintessential 70s vampire movie.

—Bill Amazzini

Taste the Blood of Dracula

Following the astonishing worldwide success of 1968's *DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE*—a success due, in part, to the film's clever ad campaign, which featured the title, a girl's neck with a Band-Aid on it, and the word "...naturally"—Warner Brothers requested another Dracula film. Hammer Films obliged with *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA*, released in 1970.

TASTE THE BLOOD differed from previous films in the company's Dracula series by moving away from the Middle European fairy-tale setting (best used in *DRACULA HAS RISEN*'s many scenes set on the quaint, slanted rooftops of Keinenburg) to an English Victorian location. The film also examined the dark sexual underside of the supposedly prim and proper era.

On the surface, the late 1800s were marked by an air of civility and a high moral code of conduct, but underneath lurked a darker, more sinister reality. Prostitution was rampant, and drugs such as cocaine and opium were easily available. Perhaps best exemplifying the split personality of the period was the horror known as Jack the Ripper, who may have been a "proper gentleman" during his saner moments, but otherwise sought out women of loose virtue and murdered them with astonishing brutality.

This is the backdrop for *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA*. Nevertheless, the film has a 1960s mentality of "never trust anyone over 30." The young heroes suffer from the repressive natures of their parents, their fathers in particular. It is only when Dracula, the embodiment of evil, is unleashed, that the children have a chance to fight back. Most are seduced by this satanic "father figure," but two offspring choose love over evil and, in the end, survive.

The film opens as Weller (Roy Kinnear), a dealer in strange goods, is robbed and ejected from a carriage. Wandering through the forest, Weller comes upon Dracula in his death throes (via footage from *DRACULA HAS RISEN*). The King of the Undead is reduced to red dust, cloak, and signet ring, all of which Weller scoops up for future sale.

Meanwhile, young lovers Alice Hargood (Linda Hayden) and Paul Paxton (Anthony Corlan) are being kept apart by William Hargood (Geoffrey Keen), Alice's sanctimonious father. Hargood's reason for disliking Paul stems from the activity that he and Jonathan Secker (John Carson) share with Paul's father, Samuel Paxton (Peter Sallis): Under the guise of doing charity work, the three men indulge

Courtley orders the trio to drink the unholy gruel; when they refuse, he smirks and drinks it himself. Almost instantly, the young lord convulses in agony and pleads for help from the horrified onlookers. In fear and revulsion, they leap upon him, kicking and beating Courtley to death.

Fleeing, the killers do not see the (effectively staged) transformation of Lord Courtley into Count Dracula (Christopher Lee), who vows revenge for the murder of his servant. One by one, the vampire seduces the offspring of the three men and forces them to kill their fathers. The most effective scene has Samuel Paxton, unable to stake his daughter, Lucy, caught by the vampiric young lady and staked himself. (As Lucy, Isla Blair is a fine addition to the Hammer gallery of female fiends.)

In the end, Paul, hoping to save Alice from Dracula's evil influence, enters the desecrated church and restores the altar, barring the doors with crucifixes the moment darkness falls. Holding the now-wakened Dracula at bay with a cross, Paul tells Alice that she is "free to choose, good or evil." Accidentally smash-

ing a stained-glass window, Dracula weakens as the religious symbols overwhelm him. Gasping, bleeding from the eyes, he falls upon the altar and disintegrates. The young lovers leave the church, free to live their lives together.

TASTE THE BLOOD's direction, by the then-35-year-old Hungarian emigré Peter Sasdy, is outstanding, evoking superlative performances from all involved and creating a marvelous sense of period. Sasdy went on to direct two more Hammer films: *COUNTESS DRACULA* (1970) and the superb *HANDS OF THE RIPPER* (1971). Sadly, none of his later films (including the 1991 Christopher Lee mystery, *SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE LEADING LADY*) has lived up to the promise of these earlier works.

Actress Linda Hayden started quite memorably as seductress Angel Blake in the Tigon witchcraft masterpiece *BLOOD ON SATAN'S CLAW* (1970). Ralph Bates, of course, went on to star in several Hammer horrors. Hammer veteran Michael Ripper makes a welcome, if brief, ap-



Paul Paxton and Alice Hargood (Anthony Corlan and Linda Hayden) try to cross Dracula...

themselves in the seamier pleasures to be had in the poor districts of town, a regular haunt being a brothel hidden behind a soup kitchen.

There, the revelries are interrupted by Lord Courtley (Ralph Bates, in his Hammer debut), who barges in and, snapping his fingers, appropriates one of the girls. Felix (Russell Hunter), the male madam, explains that the intruder comes from a well-to-do family, but has been disowned for performing the Black Mass in the family chapel. ("Very nasty it was," confides Felix.)

Intrigued, the three men approach Lord Courtley. Realizing that they are bored and eager to try something new, Courtley takes them to Weller's shop to purchase Dracula's remnants for the princely sum of £1000. Moving on to an abandoned church, Courtley slashes his hand and drops blood into a goblet containing the red dust. The contents overflow the goblet as Courtley invokes his dark master and lightning fills the church with an eerie glow.

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pearance as a police inspector investigating the murders. Anthony Corlan starred as Emil in **VAMPIRE CIRCUS** (1972), later changing his name to Anthony Higgins and appearing in 1981's **RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK** and 1985's **YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES** (playing Moriarty in the latter).

At the time of its release, **TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA** was not a major success, and the next film returned Dracula to Transylvania for the weakest of the series, **SCARS OF DRACULA** (1970).

Christopher Lee has little regard for the film; he feels that the series degenerated with each succeeding episode. (Not coincidentally, the size of Lee's role degenerated as well.) Still, the film has stood the test of time, and seems to grow fresher with each passing year.

Note: Vincent Price was announced for **TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA**, but does not appear. **TASTE THE BLOOD** was filmed concurrently with **THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES**, which began filming in April 1969 and finished in November of that year. Lee played Mycroft Holmes.

—Kevin G. Shinnick



...but the wily Count (Christopher Lee) flees to the relative safety of a choir loft.

Photo courtesy of Dick Kramerson

BILLY THE KID VERSUS DRACULA

How many bad John Carradine movies are more infamous than *BILLY THE KID VERSUS DRACULA* (1966)? Carradine himself helped spread the film's notoriety, frequently citing it to interviewers as his worst movie. (Before *BILLY* came along, Carradine's least favorite was *VOODOO MAN*.) The film is every bit as silly as its title implies, but it isn't unwatchable; its veteran cast and off-the-wall premise make it worth a peek for the easy-to-please fan, and not too onerous a screen-watching chore for the obstinate horror buff who feels it imperative to see every Dracula movie.

The plot is reminiscent of the earlier *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* (1958), with the Count (Carradine) posing as the uncle of a cattle-ranch girl (Melinda Plowman) in order to operate out of her home. As in *RETURN*, Dracula becomes the focus of suspicion when mysterious murders begin to occur, and in broad daylight he carries the girl off to a cave

(in this case, a defunct silver mine); there, he's climactically staked by the girl's steadfast boyfriend, reformed gunslinger William H. "Billy the Kid" Bonney (actor/stuntman Chuck Courtney).

Anyone would be forgiven for thinking that John Carradine was bound to be the main asset of this small-scale horror/action film, but, surprisingly, that isn't the case. The satanic-looking star (sporting a mustache and goatee) gives a performance that seems more suited to an elementary-school stage: mugging, bulging his baggy eyes, bombastically delivering his lines, and generally disgracing himself (and the picture). As a consequence, the actors around him look pretty darn good, especially the attractive young leads (Plowman and Courtney). Old-time troupers Roy Barcroft, Olive Carey, Virginia Christine, Marjorie Bennett, William Forrest, and Harry Carey, Jr. help bring up the rear; Bing Russell, Kurt's father, has a villainous supporting role as a jealous ranch-hand who becomes Carradine's hired gun.

Make no mistake, *BILLY THE KID VERSUS DRACULA* deserves much (maybe most) of the scorn that's been heaped upon it (even if it does stand head and shoulders above its co-feature, the abominable *JESSE JAMES MEETS FRANKENSTEIN'S DAUGHTER*). But who would have suspected, sight unseen, that the most detrimental thing about the film would be John Carradine's star performance?

—Tom Weaver

John Carradine was a memorable Count in Universal's HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN (1944) and HOUSE OF DRACULA (1945), but third time was definitely not the charm when he hit the ol' sawdust trail for Embassy's BILLY THE KID VERSUS DRACULA (1966).

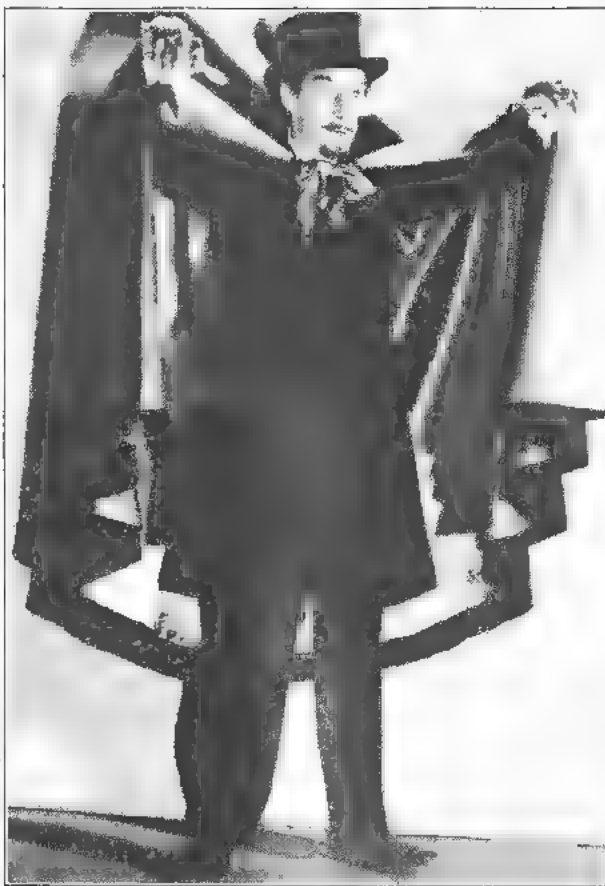
*Whisper through the night
Wings silently slice the darkness
Soft as a breath
Quiet as death
Death with a face of love
Sings a voice with a trace
of sadness
Sweeter than wine
Older than Time
She offers you escape
Fly
Don't let the sunlight find you
or you will fade and die*

—from the film's title song
by Terence Stockdale

Director Harry Kümel's *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS* (1971; original title: *LE ROUGE AUX LEVRES* or *THE PROMISE OF RED LIPS*) is an elegantly provocative addition to the canon of lesbian vampire films that gained momentum with Roger Vadim's *BLOOD AND ROSES* (1961) and reached its apotheosis with Tony Scott's dazzling *tour de force* *THE HUNGER* (1983). Although this Belgian/French/West German/Italian production is impaired by a sometimes-confusing script and leaden performances, it does present a few neat plot twists, excellent production values, and overall high-quality direction. Most of all, it features the extraordinary Delphine Seyrig, whose performance rates as one of the most strikingly unique in the genre.

The story concerns a newlywed couple who are detoured from their journey to England to a magnificent but desolate seaside hotel in Ostend, Belgium. Stefan (played by John Karlen, who previously, as Willie in the original *DARK SHADOWS*, unleashed the bloodthirsty Barnabas Collins) and his bride, Valerie (Daniele Ouimet), are painfully realizing that the honeymoon is definitely over. It seems that Stefan has married beneath his class and kept it a secret from his aristocratic mother. Unknown to Valerie, "Mother" is, in reality, a briefly-seen flamboyant character (Fons Rademakers) with whom Stefan is having a homosexual relationship. Also, the bride is becoming alarmed at her groom's increasingly sadistic behavior toward her.

Enter the enigmatic and stylish Countess Elisabeth Bathory. (If you've passed Vampirism 101, you have a good idea of what's to come.) Soon, she and her voluptuous companion, Illona (Andrea Rau), draw the unwary couple into a web of infidelity, murder, and blood lust. Eventually, Illona meets a unique demise involving a bathroom shower and straight-edged razor, and Stefan experiences the one and only "death by glass dish cover" in cinematic history. At the finale, having finally enticed Valerie over to the dark side,



© 1965, Embassy Pictures



ABOVE and RIGHT: Countess Elizabeth Bathory (Delphine Seyrig) whispers sweet nothings to the innocent wife (Daniele Ouimet) while the bisexual husband (*DARK SHADOWS*' John Karlen) rinses a few things with the Countess' lover (Andrea Rau).



the Countess is unexpectedly impaled during a freak car accident. This film closes with the knowledge that Valerie will carry the vampiric flame in her stead.

Upon its release, *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS* received decidedly mixed reviews. The *New York Times* commended the film for being "subtle, stately, stunningly colored and exquisitely directed;" the *Village Voice* chided rather unfairly that the movie "demonstrates neatly why there isn't a Belgian film industry." Matters weren't helped by the comically misleading advertisement blurb, which teased, "If you think these ladies are something... wait until you meet MOTHER, she's something else!"

Although only 87 minutes in length in its U.S. release (some of the sexually explicit and violent elements were trimmed from the original 96-minute running time), the film seems overly long as a result of story inconsistencies. For example, even though Bathory incites Valerie to defy her husband's abusive tendencies near the end of the film, she also goads her into asking his forgiveness—after which they murder him! There's also a lame subplot, left unresolved, involving a detective (Georges Jamin) who has been tracking Bathory's bloody path through Europe.

Seyrig excepted, the actors are, at best, only adequate. Especially bad is Daniele Ouimet, who delivers a catatonic nonperformance as the bewildered bride. She is so emotionless throughout that it is difficult to decide when the character is herself and when she is under the spell of the Countess.

The film contains several riveting scenes that have surely influenced later filmmakers. The red-tinted, nude vampir-

istic love scene between Bathory and Valerie, and the ending of the film, in which a novice vampire carries on for her creator, is mirrored in similar scenes in 1983's *THE HUNGER*. Dutch director Paul Verhoeven's stylish *THE FOURTH MAN* (1984) is also reminiscent of Kümel's film in its concern with the supernaturally-tinged downfall of a bisexual antihero at the hands of a vampirishly predatory woman who lives in a desolate seaside town.

There have been many memorable grand entrances in vampire films: Bela Lugosi's eerie descent down a cobweb-enshrouded stairway in 1931's *DRACULA*, Frank Langella's dramatic arrival as he majestically removes his cloak with a flourish in 1979's remake, or almost any of Christopher Lee's spectacularly staged appearances in the Hammer series. In *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS*, it's the Countess' electrifying entrance in a blood-red sports coupe that gives the male-dominated vampire genre a much-needed kick in the pants. From the moment she emerges from the night, exquisitely bedecked in black fur and veil, French actress Delphine Seyrig owns the film.

Seyrig, who died in 1990, was a well-respected performer who worked with some of the world's greatest European directors in a number of modern classics of the avant garde and mainstream cinema. These include Alain Resnais' *LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD* (1961), Francois Truffaut's *STOLEN KISSES* (1968), and Luis Buñuel's *DISCREET CHARM*

OF THE BOURGEOISIE (1972). As the Countess, Seyrig creates a thoroughly charming character who is equal parts platinum-blond screen siren and black-hearted villainess. The ultimate haute-couture spider, she serenely glides through the evil proceedings outfitted in crimson pleats, purple and black feathers, patent leather, and silver lamé. She wickedly credits her ageless beauty to "a strict diet and lots of sleep," and sweetly warns a nemesis, "You will find it greatly to your advantage to be nice to me." There is an especially unnerving scene in which the hotel's concierge, Pierre (Paul Esser), recalls meeting the Countess 40 years earlier when he was a bellboy and she looked exactly the same. Seyrig's skillful talent makes us believe her capable of the kindest graciousness and the most dastardly of crimes.

Toward the end of the film, Bathory reveals a glimpse of her eternal, melancholy existence in a poignantly effective monologue: "I'm just an outmoded character... nothing more. Yes, you know, the beautiful stranger, slightly sad, slightly mysterious, that haunts one place after another." Long after the memory of *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS* fades to red in our minds, Seyrig's Countess rises up in our dreams with the promise of an opulent afterlife. Just remember, behind the gloss of those ruby lips lies an unquenchable thirst...

—Michael Orlando Yaccarino

Daughters of Darkness

The Vampire

The local mad scientist of a small California community (no town should be without one) mysteriously dies, but not without passing on to the country doctor attending him a vial of innocent-looking white pills, the result of years of research on vampire bats. Stricken with a migraine, the mild-mannered medic carelessly reaches into his pocket for aspirin, and instead grabs the bottle of you-guessed-it. Following the time-honored horror tradition, our physician friend undergoes a horrible transformation and sets out to paint the town red—blood red, that is.

The "so old it needs crutches" plot is the least impressive element of *THE VAMPIRE*, which, surprisingly, turned out to be one of the less-appreciated movies in that banner year for black-and-white grade-B shockers, 1957. The movie (which was shot as *MARK OF THE VAMPIRE*, a title retained for television distribution, apparently so everybody could confuse it with the 1935 Lugosi shocker) earns a respectable grade for mingling vampirism with the more up-to-date science-fiction thrillers of the day, nevertheless, critics responded with glib indifference. Even Bill Warren was in a stubbornly nonrevisionistic mood when evaluating the film for his definitive sci-fi guide *Keep Watching the Skies* (McFarland, 1986), driving another nail into *THE VAMPIRE*'s coffin, skewering it in the process.

Admittedly, the movie didn't have much of a build-up when it was first released, buried as it was on the bottom half of the bill with the ultra-routine *THE*



THE VAMPIRE (John Beal) tries to tune in Cousin Bruce for advice on teenage acne problems. Okay, again we lie.

MONSTER THAT CHALLENGED THE WORLD. Star John Beal, once the fair haired boy of the New York stage, then a middle-aged actor with a toupee, exerted little teenage appeal compared to, say, Michael Landon, the lycanthropic heartthrob of *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF* (1957). Still, what *THE VAMPIRE* lacked in charisma, it made up for with savvy writing and tense, realistic performances.

Although viewers who prefer vampire movies with Gothic trappings may initially be put off by the film's complacent *LEAVE IT TO BEAVER* small-town setting, the sunny mood segues agreeably into midnight graveyard excavations and dimly-lit scenes in municipal morgues. There's a well-executed shock when police detective Kenneth Tobey disinters one of the vampire's victims,

and director Paul Landres gets the most out of a scene in which the title character stalks the leading lady down a moonlit street. (Shades of *HOUSE OF WAX*!)

No one in the cast, from the excellent Coleen Gray to Dabbs Greer (in the well-written role of a psychologist who pays dearly for his skepticism), is less than professional, but the true stand-out is Beal as the modern Jekyll/Hyde incarnation. It's so obviously a stock horror role—the kindly doctor by day, the murderous fiend by night—that even lesser talents could pull it off handily, but Beal delivers more than the usual B-movie walk through.

THE VAMPIRE is one of the most solid movies of its vintage and well worth investigating next time it makes television's late-night schedule.

—Michael Brunas

THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD

Ever since the haunting British omnibus thriller *DEAD OF NIGHT* (1946), the horror anthology has been a popular subgenre of fantastic film. Inspired by this classic, Britain's Amicus Productions, headed by American-born producer Milton Subotsky, carved for itself a distinctive niche in the realm of cinematic terrors with a series of well-made, medium-budget productions. Among their output of about 40 feature films, only eight were structured as multi story collections. Yet it is with this type of film that Amicus is most often associated, due to the enduring popularity of the company's first and best

anthologies: *DR. TERROR'S HOUSE OF HORRORS* (1966), *TORTURE GARDEN* (1967), and *THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD* (1971).

Active during the Hammer heyday—and frequently using the same talent—Amicus was never really in direct competition with their fellow frightmakers, preferring to develop a slate of supernatural tales and suspense thrillers. With writers such as Robert Bloch providing the story lines, these tales were as often infused with black humor as with black magic.

Producer Subotsky and partner Max Rosenberg were content to let Hammer

specialize in Grand Guignol treatments of classic monster tales. Yet they couldn't resist putting the occasional bite on their compatriots with satirical send-ups of Hammer's vampire series, the best of which is found in *THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD*.

Flamboyant horror star Paul Henderson (Jon Pertwee) arrives grandly at the doorstep of the eponymous House with long-time leading lady Carla Lind (Hammer's veteran vamp Ingrid Pitt). A self-proclaimed expert on the authentic supernatural, Henderson is intrigued by the estate agent's warnings of previous "occurrences"

in the now-vacant house and decides to rent the place while shooting his latest epic, "Curse of the Bloodsuckers," at a nearby studio.

The production begins quite unsatisfactorily for the horror star, and he castigates the inexperienced director for his lack of style. He extols the old classic fright films: "FRANKENSTEIN, PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, DRACULA... the one with Bela Lugosi, of course, not this new fellow."

Dissatisfied with the prop department's lack of authentic accoutrements, Henderson finds real inspiration in a creaky old theatrical shop. A strange Ernest Thesigeresque proprietor (Geoffrey Bayldon) sells him a vintage cloak that sets the actor atingle with vampiric vibrations. So charged up is he that in the next day's scene with co-star Carla he can't hold back and takes an authentic bite of the leading lady's neck.

His growing suspicions that the cape is possessed by the soul of a vampire are confirmed at the stroke of midnight, when Henderson grows real fangs and begins an uncontrolled ascent to the ceiling, courtesy of the cursed cloak. The lovely Carla seems happily unconcerned by the bizarre occurrence, and even takes a turn at wearing the cloak herself. Henderson backs away from the girl fearfully as she explains her merry mood through newly-sprouted fangs: "We loved your films so much, we wanted you to become one of us. Welcome to the club!"

The original version of this vignette (based on "The Cloak," a Robert Bloch pulp story from the 30s) concerned a man seeking a Dracula costume for a masquerade party. It was Bloch's friend Christopher Lee who suggested the protagonist be a frustrated horror star, and the tone of the story be comic. Although Lee was originally slated to play the role, he yielded to John Pertwee, best known as television's third Dr. Who. Lee appeared instead as the fearful parent of a deceptively angelic child in "Sweets To The Sweet," another excellent segment in *THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD*.

—John J. Mathews



Jon Pertwee performs some fancy capework on Ingrid Pitt after checking into *THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD* (1971).



Catherine Deneuve and David Bowie are the stylish undead of 1983's *THE HUNGER*.

The Hunger

Nothing human loves forever...

She was created on the banks of the Nile, long before the birth of Christ. She met him sometime in the 1800s. Now, together, they live on Manhattan's Upper East Side in a grand, baroque brownstone. Their magnificent mausoleum is decorated to its Tiffany skylights with priceless artifacts that were new when first acquired. They are Miriam and John Blaylock, ultra-chic, ultra-riche, and constantly in search of new blood... literally.

The years have worn well on Miriam. Still young, still achingly beautiful, she is the eternal Sphinx. But time is taking a toll on John. His latest doses of plasma have no effect. He's unable to sleep. He's losing his hair. He's starting to decay.

Miriam is upset (after all, they have been together for almost 200 years) and consults Dr. Sarah Roberts, a specialist on the aging process. Can John's disintegration be stopped? Sadly, no. So Miriam files her unfortunate suitor away in the attic, in a box, with the rest of her collection of undead lovers, and sets her sights on the innocent doctor.

THE HUNGER (1983) is so avant-garde, so stylish, so dazzling, it makes your eyes hurt. Director Tony Scott (Ridley's brother) skillfully creates an erotic world of misty shadows, swirling fabric, couture fashion, and Gothic horror: a world populated by fabulous creatures.

French icon Catherine Deneuve embodies the ageless Miriam. Deneuve is so exquisite that it scarcely matters that she says barely a word. The bizarre David Bowie admirably meets the difficult acting challenge of rapidly aging from a youthful 30 to a withered 200. Susan Sarandon, as Dr. Roberts, bravely battles Miriam's black-widow tendencies for her own soul.

Lest we forget, lurking beneath the wild elegance is a horror film—an extremely gruesome horror film. Victims are vividly liquidated, rotting corpses arise from antique coffins, and the remains of Miriam's late-night banquets are cremated in an industrial-size incinerator. Blood is everywhere: flowing from slashed arteries, spilling from opened mouths, leaching through sheet music, soaking into gleaming Carrera marble.

In spite of all the carnage, though, the most jolting sequence in the film is a very explicit love scene between the female leads. Set against a sensuous duet from Delibes' opera *LAKMÉ*, the sequence has Sarandon enticed by the ethereal Deneuve into becoming an unwitting participant in a blood transfusion not found in any medical book.

Ultimately, *THE HUNGER* is a triumph of style over substance, a nightmarishly sleek *Vogue* layout of sanguinary repasts, infernal seductions, and doomed romance.

—Scot D. Ryerson

CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER

During the 1970s, Hammer Films experimented with their horror formula. Sex, always a major component of Hammer horrors, came more to the foreground (e.g., the highly successful *VAMPIRE LOVERS* in 1971). Spoofing was tried (1970's *THE HORROR OF FRANKENSTEIN*) and quickly abandoned. Hammer's last ditch attempt at modernizing the vampire (1972's *DRACULA A.D. 72*) was disappointing and dated faster than the Nehru jacket.

The one film that combined sex, humor, and adventure successfully (critically, if not financially) was 1972's *CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER*. Created and directed by Brian Clemens, the man who gave us *THE AVENGERS* on television, *KRONOS* is the swashbuckler of horror films.

The film opens with a pre-title sequence: Two young ladies are spending the day in the woods. When one wanders off to gather flowers, the remaining girl is startled by a figure in black, whose face she (and we) cannot see. After a moment, the girl smiles and embraces the dark figure, only to scream as a small drop of

blood falls upon her discarded mirror. The "flower" girl and a passing rider rush to the girl's aid, only to find her incredibly aged.

A second village girl suffers a similar fate shortly thereafter. Dr. Marcus (John Carson of 1970's *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA*), the rider who discovered the first body, sends for his old army friend, Captain Kronos (Horst Janson), late of the Imperial Guard. Kronos is accompanied by his hunchbacked friend, Professor Grost (John Cater, who played Waverly in both *Phibes* films). Grost is an expert on vampirism: "What he doesn't know about vampires wouldn't fill a gnat's codpiece," remarks Kronos.

Along the way, Kronos and Grost free Carla, a beautiful gypsy girl (Caroline Munro, who had made her film debut the previous year as the dead wife of *THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES*). Carla had been locked in a stock for "dancing on a Sunday." In gratitude for her rescue, she joins the strange pair on their journey.

Unlike such previous Hammer bloodsuckers as Baron Meinster (in 1960's *BRIDES OF DRACULA*) and Dr. Ravna (in 1963's *KISS OF THE VAMPIRE*), the undead perpetrator of *CAPTAIN KRONOS*' misdeeds is not revealed until very near the story's end. Thus, after Kronos and crew arrive in the village, the film functions as a mystery as well as a horror movie. Suspicion finally falls on members of the aristocratic Durward family: Paul (Shane Briant), his sister Sara (Lois Daine), and their mother (Wanda Ventham). In the swashbuckling finale, Kronos confronts the vampire and engages in a duel to the death in the grand hall of Castle Durward.

CAPTAIN KRONOS is one of the few films to expound on the variation, from country to country, of vampire legends,

as well as on the best way to detect and destroy the creatures. In *KRONOS*, it is the life force of youth, not blood, that is absorbed by the undead—though, incongruously, Dr. Marcus becomes a victim and, rather than grow old, starts to become a vampire himself.

The film's characters are fascinating. The two leads, Kronos and Grost, were intended for a series of adventures that, as a result of the indifferent marketing of the first film, never materialized. (Paramount sat on *KRONOS* for two years before giving it minimal release in 1974 on the lower half of the bill with Hammer's last Frankenstein film, *FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL*.)

Partial blame for the film's failure must be placed on the casting of Horst Janson in the lead. Though he's a capable actor, Janson's performance is unadventurous and cries out for more of a devil-may-care Errol Flynn quality. The character itself has great potential: Kronos smokes certain herbal cigarettes to relax (just say no-no, Kronos!), wears his Imperial Guard uniform rakishly, and swings a mean Samurai sword. Said sword is put to good use in several sequences, the most delightful being a spoof of the typical Western showdown. Three hired "gun-slingers" (among them Ian Hendry, star of the 1961-1962 season of *THE AVENGERS*, and swordmaster William Hobbs) confront Kronos and Grost, and make mock of the professor's deformities. Kronos waits until his opponents have drawn their swords before he pulls his; then, after several quick cuts—in more ways than one—he returns the blade to his scabbard. The villains drop one by one to the ground without ever having struck a blow!

The final swordfight between Kronos and the leader of the vampires is spectacularly staged and calls to mind the classic duels between Flynn and Basil Rathbone, or Tyrone Power and Rathbone, or Rathbone and Danny Kaye, or. . .

—Kevin G. Shinnick



Professor Grost and Captain Kronos (John Cater and Horst Janson) prepare to deliver Dr. Marcus (John Carson) from the evils of vampirism in 1972's *CAPTAIN KRONOS: VAMPIRE HUNTER*.

DEAD MEN WALK

The most economical of movie monsters, the vampire requires no elaborate makeup, outlandish rubber suit, or costly special effects; yet in the 1940s the Poverty Row studios, oddly, avoided vampires almost scrupulously. PRC finally put the vampire on the Poverty Row map with

1943's *DEAD MEN WALK*, an unimaginative thriller starring George Zucco. Even here, though, the vampire does not conform entirely to the legend (the popular Universal *Dracula* legend, at any rate). Like Armand Tesla, undead protagonist of *THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE* (also 1943), Zucco's vampiric Elwyn Clayton does not become a bloodsucker through the bite of another vampire, but returns from death as a result of his obsession with the occult. It remains for twin brother Lloyd (Zucco with a "toup") to send Elwyn back to his grave after Elwyn be-

gins preying on the citizenry of their small Middle-American town.

The screenplay by Fred Myton is a well-veiled retread of Universal's *DRACULA* (1931), with Elwyn as the *Dracula* counterpart preying on Lloyd's daughter, Gayle, the *Mina* counterpart (played by Mary Carlisle). Lloyd embodies both Dr. Seward (he's Gayle's father as Seward is *Mina's*) and Professor Van Helsing (he battles the vampire). Gayle's fiancé, David, played by Ned Young, gets in the way almost as much as *DRACULA'S* John Harker. (Blacklisted in the 1950s, ac-

tor Ned Young used a pseudonym to become a screenwriter, winning a 1958 Oscar for his co-scripted *THE DEFIANT ONES* and being nominated again for 1960's *INHERIT THE WIND*.) Elwyn's hunchbacked servant Zolarr is, of course, Renfield, a parallel underlined by the fact that Dwight Frye played both roles; the ailing actor died later that same year.

Continuity, that B-picture bugaboo, is again sacrificed on the low-budget altar.

In a transfusion scene, the Good Zucco's eyeglasses appear and disappear from shot to shot. During a church scene, at least one extra enters twice. The Bad Zucco's coffin is a half-couch in some scenes and a full-open in others. The same footage of Frye wheeling the coffin around is shown twice, once normally and the other time "flipped" left-for-right.

Coasting on the presence of veteran horror stars Zucco and Frye, *DEAD MEN*

WALK is a small-time vampire film, too familiar to generate the proper interest, too slack to achieve the desired effects. Zucco gets highway mileage out of his deep dyed villainous role, and the film gives us one last look at poor, dying Frye in his accustomed graveyard milieu, but these are doubtful charms for the uninitiated. *DEAD MEN WALK* is hackneyed and obvious.

—Tom Weaver

Velvet Vampire

A female vampire (Celeste Yarnall) meets an attractive young couple (Sherry Miles and Michael Blodgett). She fascinates and destroys the man and seduces the woman. This simple plot structure has given birth to two movies: *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS* and *VELVET VAMPIRE*. Both made in 1971, they are poles apart in terms of quality.

DAUGHTERS is stylish, erotic, campy, well-photographed, expertly directed, and, above all, deliciously wicked. *VELVET VAMPIRE* has none of these

virtues, being pure exploitation at its worst. Stephanie Rothman's direction lacks a point of view, or even an indication of interest on her part. We have all seen low- and no-budget films that were saved by a director's vision. The only thing in Rothman's eye was, most likely, a sty. Daniel LaCambre's photography ranges from flat to abysmal, and his lighting is atrocious. The opening scene, set in an art museum, is so dark and muddy that viewers cannot understand who's who, or who is speaking to whom. A scene in an aban-

doned mine consists mainly of three flashlights having a conversation. Maurice Jules, Charles S. Swartz, and Rothman collaborated in writing this opus: I suppose it needed three truly mediocre minds to compose such appalling dialogue. For conceiving so many awkward comments, stilted non-sequiturs, and clumsy double-entendres, the writers deserve the Drivel Award for 1971. Even the score by Clancy B. Grass III and Roger Dollarhide is annoying, made up as it is of repetitive, second-rate country rock, with some pseudo-

Proving beyond a doubt that cleanliness is next to ungodliness, Sherry Miles and Michael Blodgett reveal as much of their assets as a bubble bath allows in 1971's VELVET VAMPIRE.



Gothic pipe organs tootling at the climax. It's like being stuck in an elevator in Biloxi.

Many poor films contain performances in which talented actors strive, sometimes successfully, to make their characters believable. No such luck here! Michael Blodgett, Celeste Yarnall, and Sherry Miles are obviously graduates of the Malibu Twinky School of Dramatic Arts, wherein busts and buns, not bravura, rules. (Blodgett was the sole beefcake on view in the cheesy *BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS*, directed by Russ Meyer in 1970. Incredibly, from the evidence of that film and *VELVET VAMPIRE*, he managed an effective portrayal under Joseph Mankiewicz's direction in 1970's *THERE WAS A CROOKED MAN*.) The camera spends much time revealing the flesh of these three, in bed, at poolside, in dream sequences, to the point of soft-core porn—probably hoping to take the viewer's attention away from the cast's flat delivery of lines and basic disinterest in each other. It's all to no avail. There is more genuine eroticism in a single scene from *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS* than in all the images of bobbing boobs and butts flashing inanely through this drab film. On the dress rack of the undead, *VELVET VAMPIRE* is pure polyester.

—Ken Schachtman



Similar in structure to DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS (1971), VELVET VAMPIRE reaches its climax with the title character (Celeste Yarnall) disposing of a handsome young sadist (Michael Blodgett) and taking his wife as her lover.

The Brides of Dracula

"Don't blame me, Mistress," croaks the old nurse, Greta (Freda Jackson). "I've always kept faith with you. Twenty years since I first saw you come to the castle here with the old Baron and your little son. A fine, handsome little imp he was, too. But you spoiled him, oh yes! He was always self-willed and cruel and you encouraged him. Aye, and the bad company he kept, too. You used to sit and drink with them, didn't you? Yes, and you laughed at their wicked games. Till in the end one of them took him, made him what he is. . . . You done what you could for him since then. Keeping him here a prisoner. Bringing these young girls to him; keeping him alive with their blood! But the powers of darkness are too strong. They've beaten you!"

The above soliloquy conjures up a bone-chilling portrait of the diseased and decadent family Meinster in Hammer Films' classic vampire tale *THE BRIDES OF DRACULA* (1960).

Though an earlier screenplay (*DRACULA II*) was initially developed by Hammer as a follow-up vehicle for their star, Christopher Lee (who rose to fame in 1958's *HORROR OF DRACULA*), plans were quickly changed and another screenplay devised when Lee refused to reprise

his character. (*DRACULA II* would later resurface as *DRACULA—PRINCE OF DARKNESS* in 1966. Lee starred.)

Peter Cushing, who also starred in *HORROR OF DRACULA*, was less fearful of being typecast and agreed to again head the cast as the vampire hunter, Dr. Van Helsing. Producers Anthony Hinds, Michael Carreras, and Anthony Nelson-Keys picked Martita Hunt, Yvonne Monlaur, Freda Jackson, Miles Malleon, and Andree Melly to round out the film's list of seasoned players. However, in a decidedly chancy gamble, Hammer cast blonde actor David Peel in the pivotal role of the vampire, Baron Meinster. It would prove to be an ingenious choice. By allowing the Baron to appear deceptively angelic, the filmmakers added yet another tense undercurrent to the mysterious goings-on at the Chateau Meinster.

Scriptwriters Jimmy Sangster, Peter Bryan, and Edward Percy open the film with a young woman, Marianne Danielle (Yvonne Monlaur), en route from Paris to the Lang Academy at Badstein, where she is to assume a teaching post. The coach stops at a nearby village to rest the horses. While Marianne seeks a meal at the inn, the driver (Michael Ripper) is bribed into abandoning her. Marianne seeks the help

of the innkeepers (Norman Pierce and Vera Cook), but their plan to escort her to Badstein is thwarted by the arrival of Baroness Meinster (Martita Hunt). The Baroness befriends Marianne and offers her the comfort of her chateau for the night. She further promises to see to it that Marianne reaches her destination in the morning. Marianne innocently agrees to the old woman's proposal.

Later that evening, Marianne learns that the Baroness' son (David Peel) is being kept prisoner by his mother. Stealing the key that will free the young man from the golden chains that restrain him, Marianne unwittingly releases a vampire! When Marianne finds the body of the Baroness, she flees the castle and is rescued by Dr. Van Helsing (Peter Cushing), who, en route to the village, comes upon her in the forest. Van Helsing has been summoned by the local priest (Fred Johnson), who suspects that his congregation is beset by an unspeakable evil force. The doctor offers Marianne his protection and escorts her to the Lang Academy.

Following leads provided by Marianne and the priest, Van Helsing enters the Chateau Meinster, where he finds the Baroness. She has become one of the undead, a victim of her own son's blood lust. The doc-

tor frees her soul, but he is unsuccessful in his attempt to destroy the Baron. Meinster visits Marianne at the academy and proposes marriage. Marianne accepts.

Dr. Van Helsing returns to the school and is informed of the death of one of the student teachers, Gina (Andree Melly). Examining the woman's body, he finds the telltale wounds of a vampire attack. He is further distressed to learn of Marianne's betrothal to the Baron.

That night, after witnessing Gina's "rebirth" as one of the undead, Marianne is abducted by the Baron and taken to his new lair—an abandoned windmill. Van Helsing battles Baron Meinster for her soul, trapping the vampire in the shadow of the windmill's blades, which the doctor turns to form a gigantic cross. Unable to free himself from the confines of the holiest of Christian symbols, the Baron will ultimately succumb to the lethal rays of the morning sun.

THE BRIDES OF DRACULA is arguably one of the most brilliant cinematic examples of Gothic horror ever produced. Director Terence Fisher, though saddled with some minor script inconsistencies as well as a misleading title, manages to keep audiences fascinated with the story's characters. Some of the film's more horrific aspects are merely implied,

and many have unjustly considered this a fault. The subtleties of the film, however, reveal themselves after one has had time to fully absorb them. One example concerns Baroness Meinster: Eager for diversion to compensate for her own lack of purpose, the woman indulges her son's precocious and cruel nature. Eventually, he becomes involved with the disciples of a vampire cult. One of them corrupts him, turning the young man into a vampire. The Baroness, however, instead of feeling remorse over what she knowingly encouraged, blames her child for what she helped to perpetuate. She furthers her complicity by keeping him supplied with victims. Oddly, her redemption comes only after she falls victim to her son's incestuous attack and willingly allows Van Helsing to purify her soul with her true death.

Fisher's dark and foreboding tale is greatly enhanced by Bernard Robinson's magnificent sets. Malcolm Williamson's appropriately moody score stands high among the film's many achievements.

Whether one is a Hammer fan or not, THE BRIDES OF DRACULA is one of the studio's most impressive entries in its vast array of cinema vampire lore.
—Deborah Del Vecchio



BLACULA

BLACULA (1972) is a product of its times. Its scariest aspect is, perhaps, its portrayal of blacks and homosexuals. Was it really only 20 years ago that movies promulgated such stereotypes?

A pair of effeminate interior decorators are Blacula's first victims. After they receive their bites and join the ranks of the undead, two policemen search for the "faggots."

"Is that the one?" asks one officer. "I don't know. All these faggots look alike to me," the other responds.

As for Afro-Americans, the film ranks with SHAFT (1971) as a prime example of the black exploitation genre of the period. Spike Lee it's not. Still, BLACULA, directed by William Crain, succeeds in several areas. William Marshall, as Mamuwalde/Blacula, offers a dignified, proud character. An African tribal chief, Mamuwalde is eloquent in speech and manner, which belie his capabilities when taking on the Blacula persona. Mamuwalde's mistake, in 1780, is to tick off Count Dracula (Charles Macaulay). For that, he is cursed to "starve for eternity... torn by an unquenchable lust... the wild, gnawing animal hunger... a hunger for human blood." To further emphasize the gravity of Mamuwalde's transgression, Dracula adds, "I curse you with my name. You shall be Blacula."

As his tribe's leader, Mamuwalde has merely sought Count Dracula's assistance in abolishing the slave trade. Their meeting begins cordially, but quickly dissolves into a war of words, which seals Mamuwalde's fate (and all before the opening credits).

As the number of unexplainable deaths begins to mount in Los Angeles—where Blacula winds up after Bobby (Ted Harris) and Billy (Rick Metzler), the aforementioned "faggots," purchase Dracula's "effects"—Gordon Thomas (Thalmus Rasulala), a Quincy-type character who bills his employer simply as "Scientific Investigation Division," notes that the common denominator linking the deaths is—what else?—a bite mark on the neck. Instead of actually saying, "I know this sounds crazy, but..." Thomas becomes self-absorbed and single-minded—nearly to a fault. His demeanor causes the local mortician to observe, "That is the rudest nigger I've ever seen in my life!"

The dialogue must be taken in the context of the times—so, too, the music and costumes (MOD SQUAD meets SANFORD AND SON). But BLACULA does provide some legitimate chills, mixed with a bit of pathos.

We don't hate Blacula. We pity him. When he meets his self-inflicted end, a la the Wicked Witch of the West, you almost feel that you'll miss him—at least until he comes back and wears out his welcome in Bob Kelljan's SCREAM, BLACULA, SCREAM (1973).

—Rick Hirsch

The Return of the Vampire

By the early 1940s, a Universal horror film was virtually assured of being a money-maker. However their contemporaries regarded the quality of Universal's output, it was a fact: The studio had the formula and the team to put it together and make it work. So it was a foregone conclusion that another film factory would eventually try to tie the same ingredients together, hoping to duplicate Universal's success: "Let's sign Bela Lugosi to play a vampire, design a few fog-shrouded sets, throw in a werewolf, commission a good score (by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco), and call it RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE! How can it miss?" Well, for many a horror fan it missed by such a wide margin that it unwittingly entered the realm of comedy, but others prefer to look on it as one of those 40s efforts that is just plain fun. It certainly has its strong points, among them a sturdy Lugosi performance during a period when he was reduced to playing butlers for Monogram.

The film opens in 1918 in London with vampire Armand Tesla (Lugosi) claiming a small girl, Nikki (Shirlee Collins), as his victim. Her grandfather, Professor Walter Saunders (Gilbert Emery), and the professor's former student,

Dr. Jane Ainsley (Frieda Inescort), track the fiend to his graveyard lair and drive a metal spike through his heart. (Apparently Columbia's vampire lore was less wooden than Universal's.) The vampire's werewolf henchman, Andreas (Matt Willis), discovers them in the act, collapses, and is freed from Tesla's evil influence.

Years later, Scotland Yard catches up with the deed after examining the journals left behind by the late professor. Sir Frederic Fleet (Miles Mander) doesn't believe in vampires, though, and warns Lady Jane that she may be liable to prosecution for murder. (Sound familiar? See DRACULA'S DAUGHTER elsewhere in this issue.) Soon after, two cemetery laborers (Billy Bevan and William P. Austin) discover the remains of Tesla and remove the spike. This means that he is again free to paint the town red, so Tesla re-enlists Andreas' services, returns him to his hairy state, and embarks on a campaign of revenge, planning to make the grown-up Nikki (Nina Foch) and Ainsley's son John (Roland Vamo) vampires like himself. Tesla's goal is almost reached when Andreas summons up the "goodness" instilled in him by Lady Jane, drags his master into the sunlight, and stakes him

for good measure. The dying Andreas regains his soul, and Tesla's rotted remains are discovered by Lady Jane and the still skeptical Sir Frederic. The film ends with the smiling Scotland Yard man asking the audience if it really believes in vampires.

Kurt Neumann, who directed SECRET OF THE BLUE ROOM for Universal in 1933, penned the original story for the film, then entitled THE VAMPIRES OF LONDON. Columbia slated him to direct as well, but when the film's starting date was postponed, Neumann went to Monogram to helm THE UNKNOWN GUEST (1943) and Lew Landers replaced him. By the time production began, the title was THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE. The finished film certainly owed much of its look to Universal's products of the period, RETURN being a not-so-thinly disguised Dracula film—its only concession to the danger of a lawsuit being the character's change of name. Despite this alas, Lugosi was playing Dracula and looking as if he was having a great time. Most critics land Lugosi's contribution to RETURN, but have little praise for the film itself. According to writer Tom Weaver (in *Poverty Row Horrors*, McFarland, 1992), "Under Lew Landers' guidance, Bela Lugosi gave a strong, malevolent performance in mist-shrouded scenes that reeked with atmosphere. The rest of the picture, unhappily, just reeked." Gilbert Emery, seen in the first 15 minutes of the story as vampire fighter Professor Saunders, was, in DRACULA'S DAUGHTER, the Scotland Yard official who refused to believe in the undead. Columbia cast Matt Willis, an actor bearing a hefty resemblance to Lon Chaney, as Andreas (in a makeup design resurrected for the same studio's 1956 chiller THE WEREWOLF and worn by Steven Ritch). Character actor Billy Bevan was cast in a comic role similar to the one he played in DRACULA'S DAUGHTER (1936). Screenwriter Griffin Jay had worked on stories for Universal's THE MUMMY'S HAND (1940), THE MUMMY'S TOMB (1942), and THE MUMMY'S GHOST (1944), and director Landers (formerly Louis Friedlander) had the Karloff/Lugosi THE RAVEN (1935) to his credit at that studio.

Columbia's formula paid off. By December 1943, box-office figures were so good that a sequel, BRIDE OF THE VAMPIRE, was planned. Filming began under that title, but the movie evolved not into a sequel, but into 1944's CRY OF THE WEREWOLF. Although THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE does not measure up to the films it sought to imitate, and cannot claim even a classic "B" status, it was a worthy effort and a refreshing step up from the dreary work of such studios as PRC and Monogram.

—Richard Scrivani



Bela Lugosi returned to the role that made him famous—in spirit if not in name—as the undead Dracula stand-in, Armand Tesla, in 1943's THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE. Nina Foch played his unwilling victim.



Dracula (Frank Langella) never drinks wine, but he sets a mean dinner table.

Dracula

Slicing through the blackest night, the lonely but savage howl of a wolf is heard. Overhead, the brilliant moon orbits the ruined battlements of Carfax Abbey in one great arc. But is this waxing sphere the cause of pandemonium among the inmates at the nearby sanitarium, or is it a guiding beacon for the undead stranger who is about to ravage the minds, bodies, and souls of an unsuspecting ensemble in turn-of-the-century England? The ship that bears him, manned by a massacred crew, is wrecked upon the jagged coast. A snarling wolf, the only survivor, leaps from the deck and disappears into the safety of a nearby cavern. The beast is soon followed by the dazed, barefoot figure of a delicate young lady wearing nothing but a lace nightgown to protect her from the raging storm. In the shelter of the cave, she discovers not the wolf, but a man, lying on his side, garbed in a coat adorned with strange batlike designs. She moves to

touch him. In response, like an elegant spider, the mysterious gentleman's slender fingers emerge and grasp her shivering hand in his own. Unknown to the innocent girl, this fateful meeting will instigate a supernatural devastation of her closest friends and family. For she has invited Count Dracula into her heart and their world.

In 1975, Broadway saw a successful revival of Hamilton Deane and John Balderston's 1927 theatrical adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. The revival's strongest elements were the ingenious black-and-white Tony award winning set designs by Edward Gorey and the overtly erotic portrayal of the Vampire King by actor Frank Langella. In 1979, sparked by the play's long run, Universal Pictures (home of the original Lugosi version of 1931) re-opened the well-worn crypt to release a DRACULA with a difference.

Under John Badham's direction, Langella recreated his famed stage role to give the screen a Dracula who's a real

lady-killer. Though Christopher Lee's concept of the role introduced an edge of open sexuality to Dracula, one could not imagine having dinner with him. Langella not only has dinner twice in the film (well, at least he attends dinner), but also waltzes and literally sweeps actresses Kate Nelligan (Lucy) and Jan Francis (Mina) off their high-buttoned Victorian heels. This is not to say that the dashing Langella reduces the role to that of a brilliant Casanova. For all his suave seduction scenes, there are an equal number of moments to remind us of the character's bloodthirsty, unearthly nature: He transforms into a wolf and bat, slithers up and down walls, snaps the neck of a betrayer, and (in a thespian's ultimate act of sacrilege) he impales Laurence Olivier (Van Helsing)!

Langella's charisma on stage and screen has spawned many incarnations in which the vampire is conceived as matinee idol. Notable examples include the 1977 British TV version, COUNT DRACULA, starring the suave Louis Jourdan; Chris Sarandon's bisexual creature of the night in FRIGHT NIGHT (1985); and the late-night CBS series FOREVER KNIGHT, with blonde vampire beefcake Geraint Wyn Davies.

The 1979 revamp is satisfying on all counts, from the ensemble performances, which bring to life Stoker's oftentimes two-dimensional characters (of special note is Donald Pleasence as the bumbling gourmand, Dr. Seward), to the magnificently-realized sets and costumes that capture and slightly update the original 1897 time period of the novel to include vintage roadsters and opulent Edwardian gowns. Enhancing the romantic and otherworldly soul of the film is composer John William's ravishing music: certainly one of his most brilliantly complex but overlooked scores.

Proving the undying fascination with Stoker's evil and seductive creation, we are currently on the brink of a new glut of vampire films. In a continuing cycle that officially began in 1922 with F. W. Murnau's NOSFERATU and shows no signs of stopping, DRACULA (1979) is a high point of the genre.

—Michael Orlando Yaccarino and
Scot D. Ryerson

THE LOST BOYS

One thing about living in Santa Carla I never could stomach—all the damn vampires.

—Bernard Hughes

Lucy, recently divorced, moves with sons Michael and Sam from Arizona to live with her father in Santa Carla, a beach town in California. Driving past a sign welcoming them to town, Michael notices that someone has added their own descrip-

tion of Santa Carla on its back: "The Murder Capitol of the World."

So begins THE LOST BOYS, a hip, MTV-ish take on the vampire legend. Released in 1987, the film stars Jason Patric as Michael, Dianne Wiest as Lucy, Corey Haim as Sam, and Bernard Hughes as the boys' funky, ex-hippie grandfather, who's into taxidermy in a big way. Almost every square inch of Hughes' sprawling house is covered with his lifeless creations, much



So young, so dead...

to the disgust of young Sam. When Michael asks Grandpa about Santa Carla's reputation as a murder capitol, all the old man will say is, "If all the corpses that are buried around here were to stand up at once, we'd have a hell of a population problem." Just the thing Sam needs to hear.

Nevertheless, Sam joins Lucy and Michael that evening for a jaunt on the boardwalk. A gaudy, seedy place, the boardwalk is depicted as a magnet for the dark underside of society, those who are drawn to the bright lights of its amusement

park and sideshows. It is a place where hucksters work their cons alongside legitimate businesses, where the walls are plastered with posters of missing people.

While Mom goes job hunting, the boys check out the action at a concert. It is here that Michael first sees Star, well-played by Jami Gertz. Like a vision, she appears out of the faceless crowd, her long black hair flowing as she effortlessly leads little Laddie (Chance Michael Corbitt) through the mob of concertgoers. Immediately smitten, Michael follows her. When he discovers that she is a member of the motorcycle gang led by David (Kiefer Sutherland), Michael is even more determined to get to know this girl at any cost.

That cost includes joining the gang—an offer David extends to Michael after he proves his mettle in a dangerous motorcycle race. Michael is taken to the Lost Boys' lair: an underground hotel that was swallowed up by the 1906 earthquake. (Production designer Bo Welch, who went on to design the sets of *BATMAN RETURNS*, does a stunning job with the lair, effectively mixing the hotel's former elegance with its present day resemblance to a tomb.)

It is here that Michael is tricked into drinking a special red wine. Once he does so, David proclaims the newcomer to be one of the gang. Star and Laddie huddle timidly

in a dark corner as the Lost Boys wildly celebrate the initiation of their new member.

The premise in this film is basically the same as that of most vampire movies: The undead sleep during the day because sunlight is harmful; garlic and wooden stakes give them heartburn; they appear relatively normal until they "vamp" out, fangs and all (thanks to George Cannon's subtle makeup designs).

One of the variations on the vampire mystique made by screenwriters Janice Fischer, James Jeremias, and Jeffrey Boam is to have Michael, Star, and Laddie less than full-blooded bloodsuckers until after they make their first kill. Thus, they can revert back to human form once the lead vampire, David, is killed. Another variation comes down firmly on the side of evil: All the classic means of harming a vampire become ineffective once the creature is invited into his victim's home.

Director Joel Schumacher keeps the story moving at a brisk pace and elicits solid performance from the supporting cast, including Corey Feldman and Jason Newlander as the vampire-hunting Frog brothers, and Edward Herrmann as Max, the video-store owner who hires Lucy. Scary, as well as funny, *THE LOST BOYS* is a decidedly Californian variation on filmdom's most durable fiends.

—Sean Farrell

Martin

Is he or isn't he? That's the burning question in this thought provoking chiller written and directed by George A. Romero.

Martin (John Amplas) doesn't look like a vampire; but then, what does one look like? That is Martin's point. Movies resort to black capes, white-painted faces, and sharp canine teeth to distinguish their vampires from productive members of society. Martin, on the other hand, appears to be your average harmless loner—a silent, strange young man, in his early 20s at most, with enough quirkiness to be labelled an oddball by society.

Is Martin really the family's long-lost "Nosferatu" as Martin's elderly relative claims, or is cousin Tata Cuda (Lincoln Maazel) the crazy one? Could Martin merely be a prisoner of a delusional mind? The movie, shot with a European flair, is structured to handle either interpretation.

The movie opens with Martin riding a train to Pittsburgh. We see him fix a syringe in the public lavatory and slip into a pretty young girl's compartment. Before entering, he imagines (in sepia) a scene in which a young girl welcomes Martin with open arms. Whether this is a flashback or a premonition is not clear.

Unlike other big-screen vampires, Martin is not suave. When he bursts into

the train compartment wielding his syringe, he is surprised to find it empty. Where is the girl? A flushing toilet provides the answer. Martin is further thrown off-guard when the bathroom door opens and a girl (Fran Middleton) wearing an inch-thick mud mask emerges. (So much for the beauty in his dream!)

After Martin sticks the frightened girl with the needle, he faces a problem that torments him for the rest of the movie. His dam drugs take too long! Nearly 15 minutes pass before the struggling, screaming girl becomes the least bit groggy.

Once the girl slips into unconsciousness, Martin strips off her clothes (and his) and has sex with her. Then, he bleeds her and leaves her. Martin is not your traditional neck-biting vampire. His preference is to slash the forearm or wrist with a razor blade. Because of this rather messy method, he always needs to incorporate a change of clothes into each outing (a habit that is almost his undoing in the final scenes). He proceeds to make the death look like a suicide, dumping out the girl's pill bottle near the bathroom sink and leaving razor blades stewn about.

Martin is met at the train station by an elderly man dressed in an all-white suit. This vision in white is no angel: He's flesh-and-blood Cousin Cuda, who has taken it upon himself to rid the world of the family curse (meaning vampirism, though we're told insanity also runs in the family).

In Cuda's home, religious statues abound and cloves of garlic are hung on strings in front of doorways. "First, I will save your soul, then I will destroy you," Cuda tells his house guest. Cuda warns Martin not to "take anyone in the town" and especially not to talk to Christina (Christine Forrest), Cuda's granddaughter.



Is he or isn't he? Martin (John Amplas) may be a vampire, or he may simply have poor eating habits.

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Cuda gives Martin a job as a delivery boy, and the young man draws bored housewives like a magnet. One frustrated married woman tells him, "That's why you're so nice to have around, Martin, because you don't have opinions." Gee, thanks. Another dissatisfied wife explains her attraction to Martin by saying, "You remind me of an old alleycat I used to have. . ."

Christina thinks that the family has made Martin mad. She doesn't believe a word about "the family curse," even though Cuda claims to have proof in some old family albums that Martin's true age belies his boyish look. (Martin himself admits to being 84.) Christina offers to get Martin psychiatric help.

For a vampire, Martin does some pretty normal things: walking around in the daytime, buying ice cream off a Pied Piper truck, eating dinner with the family, washing dishes, calling a radio talk show, and even attending Catholic church!

However, Martin has terrible luck. For his next victim, he chooses a married woman (Sarah Venable) whose husband (Richard Rubenstein) is out of town. He bursts in, armed with his trusty needle, only to find her in bed with a lover (Al Levitsky). Poor Martin must use his needle on the surprised male, rather than on his preferred female target. (Throughout the break-in and subsequent attack, Martin sees sepioid visions of a beautiful young

woman leading him to bed, a lynch mob, and a botched exorcism.)

Martin tries to soothe his panicked victims: "Don't be afraid. You're just going to go to sleep. I won't hurt you. You will go to sleep and then you will wake up, I promise." Of course, Martin's a liar, and he's fooling no one. His victims continue to scream and struggle and put up a fight, while Martin looks more like a scared teenager than a supernatural vampire.

Perhaps Martin has just not acquired the right social skills. "People get crazy sometimes," he confesses on the radio call-in show. "Sometimes I think they'll catch me or hurt me, or even kill me!" The talk-show host (Gornick) sympathizes. He knows a good gimmick when he hears one: Since the mysterious "Count" has been on the air, the phone lines have been lighting up with listeners.

Cuda invites a Catholic priest over for dinner to feel him out on performing an exorcism. However, Father Howard (a delightful cameo performance by George Romero), is more interested in drinking wine.

Martin falls in love with the miserably married Mrs. Santini (Elyane Nadeau), who lures the young man by asking him to fix a screen door. "You want me here for sex, don't you?" Martin awkwardly accuses.

After sex, Mrs. Santini cries. "You're afraid you're going to have a kid, aren't you?" Martin asks. "I knew I should have worn one of those things." He also is quite con-

cerned. "Did I hurt you?" Martin, it seems, is a 90s kind of guy, a sensitive vampire.

Later, in a romantic hilltop tryst, Mrs. Santini spouts some unbelievable dialogue: "I wish you would shoot me up with drugs and take away a piece of my brain." She follows that ironic statement with another: "Boy, do I wish what you have is catching." Martin responds with, "Some people think it is catching." "Give it to me, please," she begs. (Earlier she confessed, "I have something wrong inside.") They seem made for each other.)

Mrs. Santini must have been right, because when Martin goes to visit, he finds her dead in the bathtub. Unlike the suicide scenario on the train, this one's for real. Taken aback, all Martin can say is, "I didn't do it! I didn't do it!"

Depressed, Martin calls the talk show again. "I guess I shouldn't have friends," he says lamely. "In real life, you can't get people to do what you want them to. . . You get used to things, and you get used to your life."

Martin doesn't have much more to get used to: While he sleeps, Cuda creeps up with a wooden stake and drives it home. Ironically, Cuda never heard about the three deaths Martin caused in town—but he did hear about Mrs. Santini's suicide. "I told you not to take anyone in this town," he admonishes Martin's blood-splattered corpse. "Did you really think I'd believe it was a suicide?"

Linda Longo

She Loves a MYSTERY!

Rebecca Eaton

Interviewed by Jessie Lilley



Rebecca Eaton

It's a mystery lover's dream! Rebecca Eaton is in almost constant contact with Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, Albert Campion, Adam Dalgliesh, Inspector Morse, and Rumpole of the Bailey—she has to be, because Rebecca Eaton is the executive producer of the mystery lover's favorite show—namely, MYSTERY! Recently, Ms. Eaton let *Scarlet Street* in on MYSTERY!'s murderous history—past, present, and future—and told us one or two deep, dark family secrets involving Boris Karloff and Vincent Price. . .

Scarlet Street: Most of the shows that make up the MYSTERY! series are British. Rebecca Eaton: Right.

SS: As the shows are actually produced overseas, what do you do as producer?

RE: Well, I'm actually the executive producer of MASTERPIECE THEATRE and MYSTERY!; that means I choose the programs that we buy or co-produce with the British broadcasters. In the case of an acquisition, which means a straight purchase, I screen shows and choose those that will fit MYSTERY! In the case of co-production I read scripts or books and meet with the production teams about whether or not we'll make something with them. In addition to that, I hired MYSTERY! host Diana Rigg. I oversee the studio portion of MYSTERY!, which is the design and building of the sets, the writing of her [Rigg's] scripts, and studio shooting when she's here to tape the wrap-arounds. The other thing we make for both MYSTERY! and MASTERPIECE THEATRE is fill. Sometimes the programs are short. For instance, with PRIME SUSPECT, we added an interview with the real D.C.I. Jane Tennison [the character played by Helen Mirren—Ed.], a woman named Jackie Moulton. We commissioned a producer in London to do those films. We've had interviews with David Suchet, P.D. James, and Roy Marsden, and I oversee those as well.

SS: So that's where they come from.

RE: Actually, we not only interviewed Jackie, but also the writer, Linda LaPlante, who spent a lot of time with Jackie, devising the character of Tennison.

SS: Can we expect the latest Sherlock Holmes program aired in England, *THE MASTER BLACKMAILER*, to show up on MYSTERY! this season?

RE: Yes.

SS: When *THE MASTER BLACKMAILER* ran in England, there were widespread complaints that the final scene with Inspector Lestrade had been deleted. Now, we know from talking to Jeremy Paul, who wrote the episode, that the scene was actually filmed. Is there any chance that, due to audience objections, the scene might be reinstated for its American debut?

RE: Well, first of all, it's news to me that there was a scene that was cut. Have you seen *THE MASTER BLACKMAILER*?

SS: Yes.

RE: As shot?

SS: No. We were told by both Jeremy Brett and Jeremy Paul that it was filmed, but that the powers-that-be cut it.

RE: Well, they might have cut it for time. I don't know why they cut it, and I think there isn't time for us to include it. Usually Granada delivers us programs that we don't have to fill. It's unusual for us to have to do things like the Edward Hardwicke interview.

SS: At last report, Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke were both willing to film

more Sherlock Holmes episodes, but it seems that production has been held up. Do you know what's going on?

RE: They've completed production on *THE SUSSEX VAMPYRE*, and they're planning to do another one after that. They haven't chosen which one. [Production is currently under way on a two-hour version of *THE NOBLE BACHELOR*—Ed.]

SS: Miss Marple used to be part of the MYSTERY! line-up. What happened?

RE: They now make about one Miss Marple every 18 months, because of Joan Hickson's age and health. They used to come to us as part of a complicated arrangement involving the BBC's distribution arm in this country, which is called Lionheart. . .

SS: Yes.

RE: . . . and A&E. And now they go directly to A&E.

SS: That's such a pity, because A&E edits them terribly, and American viewers are denied a chance to see the entire show.

RE: Well, I hope you say that in your magazine! (Laughs)

SS: We intend to. Among the shows that A&E edits are the Sherlock Holmes shows, which WGBH co-produces with Granada. Have you any say as to how the programs are edited, or whether they should be edited at all?

RE: Nope.

SS: Once they're gone, they're gone?

RE: Gone.

SS: Can you give us a hint as to what's planned for MYSTERY! this fall?

RE: Yeah! Next season we have a new detective, Maigret, in a six-part series from Granada, starring Michael Gambin. He was last seen on MASTERPIECE THEATRE in *THE HEAT OF THE DAY*, an Elizabeth Bowen book, and before

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Detective Chief Inspector Jane Tennison (Helen Mirren) gets a chance to prove she's as good an investigator as any man in *PRIME SUSPECT*. A sequel is on the way.

that he was Dennis Potter's *THE SINGING DETECTIVE*. There will be *THE MASTER BLACKMAILER*, *RUMPOLE*, we have *POIROT*, we have *MORSE*, and then we have some mini-series which we are in the process of buying. I can't mention their names, but they are similar to *PRIME SUSPECT*. We are considering some mini-series based on writers that we haven't had on *MYSTERY!* before. There's a whole new batch that we're looking at, but we haven't bought them yet, so I can't say.

SS: That'll be grand. Will *PRIME SUSPECT* have a sequel?

RE: There is a sequel which has been offered to us. We're considering it. I can tell you this about it: It stars Helen Mirren, and she's not still hounding the same guy.

SS: She's after somebody else now, huh? (Laughs) John Thaw has decided not to continue as Inspector Morse. Since both Jeremy Brett and Leo McKern, who plays Rumpole, have called it quits in the past, only to relent—

RE: Right.

SS:—do you think there's any chance Thaw might change his mind?

RE: Oh, I think there's always a chance. I think he may need a break. He did

do something else, a Kingsley Amis book called *Stanley and the Women*, and it may be that he needs to take a break and do other things, but you never know. Joan Hickson said she wasn't going to do Miss Marple anymore, and now she does one a year. Roy Marsden has said it occasionally, so I think if John Thaw is following in the tradition of his peers, he'll be back.

SS: With Miss Marple already gone, is *MYSTERY!* actively seeking new blood?

RE: Well, the British are making lots of detective series. We're offered one practically every week. There certainly isn't a dearth of them; we're just trying to see which emerge as front runners and which are the best. It's become such a popular genre in England. Apparently the British love murder and mayhem as much as we do, and they're constantly trying to find new detectives with legs, to use an old theatre expression. Something that will last a long time at the box office, you know?

SS: Yes, indeed. A British detective that we're dying to see is Professor Gervase Fen, who was created by Edmund Crispin. Are you familiar with Fen?

RE: Yes. He shows up periodically in a proposal, but I don't think he's ever actually made it to the script stage.

SS: We wish he would someday. He's so charmingly eccentric.

RE: I know. He was suggested to me, actually, by John Updike.

SS: Well, we're in good company. Since *MYSTERY!* co-produces some shows, is there any chance Public Television would present an American detective?

RE: Probably not, because of the economics of the situation. We are a very minor partner financially, and to make comparable shows in this country, presuming a production company could get the rights, would be very expensive. We don't have that kind of money. We might be able to do one episode, but that would be it for a whole season. We have developed a taste for British detectives, so I think we'll probably just stick with that.

SS: With the exception of *Perry Mason*, why is it impossible for our home-grown detectives—*Nero Wolfe* and *Ellery Queen*, for example—to find a spot on television?

RE: I think you'd have to ask that question of someone in commercial television. The usual question is: Why aren't things done as well on American television as on British television? And the answer to that, I think, is that the British have a greater respect for the written word, and they have a terrific repertory system for actors and writers. They have a lot of creative talent looking to work, and they manage to keep the costs down so they can make a lot of good television. Why American television doesn't do detectives—I don't know the answer. I could speculate that the rights to some of our most famous American detectives may have been bought by the movie studios back in the old days, and movie studios are notorious for holding onto



MYSTERY! fans with *A TASTE FOR DEATH* had their appetites fully satisfied by a five-part adaptation of the P.D. James novel of the same name. Pictured: Dame Wendy Hiller, Roy Marsden (as Adam Dalgliesh), and Fiona Fullerton.



Albert Campion (Peter Davison) and his valet, Lugg (Brian Glover), have just learned that there are to be no further episodes of CAMPION.

rights—sitting on rights, you might say—whether or not they intend to do anything with them. They do it to keep a corner on that particular market, as kind of a hedge against the day when they might decide they want to make something I don't know that for a fact; it's speculation, but I'm thinking of the film *V.I. WAR SHAWSKI*. It makes me think that American mysteries tend to turn into feature films rather than television series. I think it may not be what American television wants, which is either a laugh a minute or fast-moving bodily harm. (Laughs) Or else they don't sell enough soap!

SS: Has *MYSTERY!* ever considered having a series centered around a villain—Fu Manchu, for instance?

RE: Well, we thought *MOTHER LOVE*, which centered around Diana Rigg as a deranged mother, qualified, but it wasn't a traditional detective mystery. Now, there are a bunch of books—I'm looking in my bookcase as we talk—the main character is pretty much a psychopath. Ripley, by Patricia Highsmith...

SS: Right.

RE: He's pretty awful, but they were opposed to it. Yeah, we'd consider having the villain as the hero. We haven't had one yet, but we wouldn't say no.

SS: That's good to know. We've gotten several letters from readers wondering about *CAMPION* and whether any more episodes will be made.

RE: No, probably not. We did a total of 16 hours of *CAMPION* and we retired him.

SS: With budget cutbacks for Public Television, are viewers in any danger of losing *MYSTERY!*?

RE: I certainly hope not. We're fully underwritten by Mobil, as we have been for 12 years, and they underwrite *MASTERPIECE THEATRE* as well. They are still as enthusiastic as ever about both series.

SS: That's great news. Who are your favorite detectives?

RE: Oh, my goodness! Well, I have to confess that I'm a little mystery-impaired. I am not an expert on mysteries, which I think is actually an advantage.

SS: In what way is being mystery-impaired an advantage?

RE: Well—how shall I say this?—I think people who are mystery addicts, who read mysteries and have an insatiable appetite for them, are kind of forgiving about their quality. They take 'em as they come. I think that our *MYSTERY!* watchers are not necessarily mystery addicts. I think they like good television stories, so I screen them that way, looking for whether the story itself holds up. I'm sure mystery readers do this as well, but I think people who are not automatic mystery lovers might be more critical. I come to them fresh; I come to the televised versions of a lot of mystery writers fresh. I don't have an opinion formed already about what the character should look like or whether it's absolutely faithful to the book. I can judge it on its own merits. I think that probably helps, not to get hung up on whether Roy Marsden really looks like Adam Dalgliesh.

SS: But of the detectives appearing on *MYSTERY!*...

RE: I have to say I have a special place in my heart for Inspector Morse. I find something very satisfying about his episodes. I think it's because they are complicated enough and suspenseful enough to keep my interest, and I'm very fond of John Thaw and like to spend time with him—on television. I think I'd say that, if I had to go in and screen for hours, I might pick Inspector Morse. I also love Jeremy Brett as Sherlock. He's a member of the family here, because he was married to my predecessor, Joan Wilson, and he had been very



*Hair apparent! Mycroft Holmes looks with dismay upon brother Sherlock's shocking locks. Pictured: Jeremy Brett and Charles Gray as the Holmes boys in *THE BRUCE-PARTINGTON PLANS*.*

close to all of us. We sort of consider him part of the family, and we take a special interest in seeing the new things he does with the part. I think I probably—how can I say this?—respond out loud the most watching Jeremy as Sherlock. (Laughs) Some of the mannerisms he has or some of his...

SS: He seems to have stepped off the pages of the books.

RE: Ahhh! I know. I think in this last batch he was absolutely perfect. He went through a patch when he did something very odd to his hair. (Laughs) I don't know if you remember those...

SS: Oh, yes, we do!

RE: It was a very short hair cut with sort of a widow's peak and a little bit of a cowlick, and that was a bit distracting for one season, but then he grew his hair back.

SS: That's too funny. That's been the subject of some debate among our staff.

RE: I talked to the producer about it. He said that no one was more surprised than he was when Jeremy showed up on the first day of shooting with this new "do."

SS: No!

RE: And there was very little that could be done about it. (Laughs) There wasn't enough hair to slick it back Sherlock style, so they just had to film very slowly 'til it grew in.

SS: That's priceless!

RE: The other actor—I don't want to overlook anyone—I think Roy Marsden as Adam Dalgleish has the same sort of quality as Morse. I feel he needs me to watch over him. (Laughs) They're both on their own and so I feel very close to them when I screen the shows.

SS: Whereas Sherlock Holmes has Dr. Watson and Mrs. Hudson...

RE: Right! Right! And Poirot is surrounded by Miss Lemon and Hastings, and he really doesn't need anyone.

SS: We were delighted to have a short interview with David Suchet in our anniversary issue. Have you seen it?

RE: Yes, I have. It has Boris Karloff on the cover. I have to tell you something about Boris Karloff. My mother [Katherine Emery] was an actress and she was in a film with Boris Karloff.

SS: Not really?

RE: Actually, it would have shown up in your magazine had it been around at that time. It was during the 40s and it was called ISLE OF THE DEAD. She was buried alive in ISLE OF THE DEAD, as a matter of fact! She said Boris Karloff and Vincent Price were the two sweetest men she ever met.

SS: That's what we keep hearing. Were you with MYSTERY! when Vincent Price was doing wraparounds?

RE: Absolutely. I hadn't met him before, but he and my mother worked together years ago and knew each other. The first time we met I was going to bring it up in the conversation. He walked in and I was being introduced and he just flung his arms around me and remembered absolutely. I didn't say anything; he knew exactly who my mother had been. That's Vincent, inside and out. He's just marvelous. Just a lovely, lovely man. I don't know if they made any films together. They knew each other in New York, in the theatre. The only semi-mystery film she did was the Boris Karloff movie.

SS: Did she ever tell you any anecdotes about working with Price or Karloff?

RE: Oh, she just said they were the sweetest, most gracious, courtly gentlemen that any terrifying human being could be. They were so opposite to what they had cultivated as screen images. Vincent tells a funny story. Often people would come up to him on the street and say, "Oh! Aren't you Boris Karloff? Could I have your autograph, Mr. Karloff?" and he'd sign "Boris Karloff" for them. (Laughs) But they were both sweeties, my mother said.



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The Scarlet Street Review of Books

THE TANGLED SKEIN

David Stuart Davies. Foreword
by Peter Cushing O.B.E.
Theme Publications, 1992.
245 pages—£25 plus £5 postage

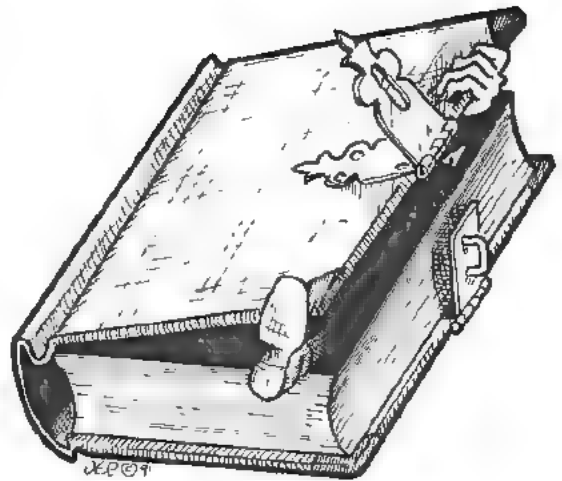
In 1959, England's Hammer Films made their sole venture into Arthur Conan Doyle territory with the first color production of *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*. Critical appraisal of the studio's efforts was (and still is) diverse, but the public, as always, made their feelings crystal clear: They liked *THE HOUND* well enough, but not nearly as much as they had liked Hammer's *HORROR OF DRACULA* (1958) and its Gothic siblings. The result, not surprisingly, was that Hammer quickly pulled up stakes on Baker Street and flew to Transylvania, there to use those stakes on *THE BRIDES OF DRACULA* (1960). Peter Cushing, a memorable Sherlock Holmes in *THE HOUND*, set aside pipe and deerstalker for crucifix and garlic to reprise his *HORROR* role of Dr. Van Helsing. Christopher Lee, cast against type as Sir Henry Baskerville in the Conan Doyle adaptation, had a fresh pair of fangs fitted for his eventual return to the role of *DRACULA*—*PRINCE OF DARKNESS* (although this wasn't to come until 1966, Bram Stoker's sanguinary Count having

deemed the earlier *BRIDES* mere "women's work").

Curious readers may be wondering what this slice of Hammer history has to do with *The Tangled Skein*, the latest Sherlock Holmes pastiche from the pen of the talented David Stuart Davies. The answer is elementary:

Had Hammer, rather than abandoning Baker Street entirely, combined Holmes and Watson with the company's standard output of vampire films, the end product might very well have been this story.

The chaotic (albeit carefully worked-out) plot of *The Tangled Skein* begins soon after the concluding events of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (the novel, not the Hammer film). The villainous Stapleton, having survived his presumed doom in the Great Grimpen Mire, seeks vengeance on the Great Detective who brought him down. Holmes' attention, however, is drawn to a different case entirely: the Hampstead Horror, which heralds the arrival of Dracula in England. Trained as vampire hunters by Professor Abraham Van Helsing, Holmes and Watson track the ravenous Count from the London streets to the Devon moor, where, in a horror filled finale, they confront Dracula, his undead brides, his human slaves, and the insane Stapleton.



This tale of Dracula's London vacation bears as much resemblance to the plot of Bram Stoker's novel as do the plots of Hammer's Dracula films—but squeezing Holmes and Watson into the constraints of Stoker's narrative is not what Davies has in mind. Instead, he plunges the reader into a Hammeresque world in which a school for girls becomes a vampire's personal fast-food restaurant, where the ugly, one-eyed dwarf who is Dracula's slave is named Meinster (after the vampiric Baron Meinster, played by David Peel—who was neither one-eyed nor ugly—in *BRIDES OF DRACULA*). For good measure, the author adds a dash of Universal seasoning to his Hammer brew—this in an early scene involving a somewhat oversized book delivered to Holmes and almost opened, with fatal results, by Watson.

Scarlet Street lives and prospers by the tenet that only a thin line separates mystery and horror. David Stuart Davies erases that line to produce a stunningly entertaining addition to both genres. Mystery fans: Here's a book to delight your Canon-crazed hearts, while letting you in on what vampire lovers love to drool over. Horror fans: Here's a book to charm those of you who haven't felt quite right since Hammer closed its doors, while opening, perhaps, a new door—the one marked 221B. Wrap yourself in *The Tangled Skein*.

—Richard Valley

THE VAMPIRE INTERVIEW BOOK

Edward Gross and Marc Shapiro
Image Publishing, 1991.
136 pages—\$14.95

Vampires have been appearing in films for almost as long as motion pictures have existed. *The Vampire Interview Book* tries to cover as much of this rich history as possible, with articles and interviews concerning a wide-ranging group of films.

It starts out on the right foot with two pieces on Bela Lugosi and Christopher Lee, actors who have given what many feel are definitive performances as Drac-



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ula. Unfortunately, if you're already a rabid fan of these legendary stars, the articles won't tell you anything new.

The book really takes off when it offers a detailed look at **DARK SHADOWS**, both the old and the new versions. Edward Gross and Mark Dawidziak's "Putting the Bite in Dark Shadows" is a highly informative piece about the creation and ultimate success of the original series. Next, Gross talks with Jonathan Frid, who offers his own view as to why the show was so popular. Then the recent **DARK SHADOWS** revival is covered, in both a short article by Dawidziak and an interview with Ben Cross. A short talk with Dan Curtis wraps up the section.

The **COUNT YORGA** films are represented by a funny interview with Robert Quarry, who played the title role in **COUNT YORGA, VAMPIRE** (1970) and **THE RETURN OF COUNT YORGA** (1971). Quarry seems very likeable in the interview and gets to show off his sense of humor.

After Quarry, we are treated to a series of mini-interviews with such performers as the late Barry Atwater, who was so memorable as Janos Skorzeny in the first **NIGHT STALKER** television movie (1971). William Marshall of **BLACULA** (1972) fame is also included, as is Frank Langella, star of the 1979 **DRACULA**. Those who toil behind the scenes are heard

from as well: Tobe Hooper talks about **LIFEFORCE** (1985), and Richard Donner tackles **THE LOST BOYS** (1987), for which he was executive producer.

The last third of the book is devoted to an in-depth look at one of my favorite vampire films, **FRIGHT NIGHT** (1985). With an introduction by writer/director Tom Holland, the coverage by writer Abbie Bernstein is presented in diary form, culled from visits to the set. This is a truly fascinating look behind the scenes, capturing not only the creativity involved, but also the inevitable screw-ups that sometimes occur.

Also included are interviews with Chris Sarandon and Roddy McDowall, vampire and vampire hunter, respectively. *The Vampire Interview Book* is recommended for vampire fans in general, but it is a **must** for fans of **DARK SHADOWS** or **FRIGHT NIGHT**.

—Sean Farrell

FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN: THE ORIGINAL 1942 SHOOTING SCRIPT

By Curt Siodmak. Edited by Philip J. Riley
MagicImage Filmbooks, 1990.
199 pages—\$19.95

"Frankenstein gave you a cunning brain, did he? But you're **dumb!**" Only one man would have the nerve to talk to

Frankenstein's Monster like that and live to wag his tail—Lawrence Talbot, the Wolf Man's alter ego, in the pages of the most incredible script to come out of MagicImage's classic-horror filmscript series. The fifth in the collection, *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* delivers in every department, and is worth the price to finally be able to read the dialogue Curt Siodmak penned for the Monster. As every horror fan worth his wolfsbane knows, the film was subjected to more editing and deletions than was usually the case for a Universal horror, making it nothing short of amazing that **FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN** turned out as well as it did. Here, at last, we can see just how Siodmak intended to present the personality of the Monster once he was (presumably) powered by Ygor's brain, which was planted in the creature's skull in **GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN** (1942). It makes one thankful that the Monster's dialogue was cut; I for one will gladly accept the stiff and ambiguous remnants of Bela Lugosi's performance over what might have been had the Monster's outrageous conversations survived.

The script fleshes out some plot details apparently later considered expendable, the major one being the fate of Maleva, the gypsy woman. Although she is not much more than window dressing in the second half of the finished film, com-

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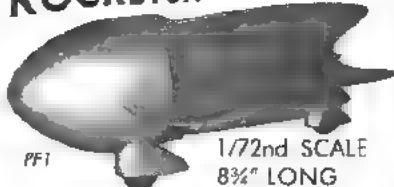
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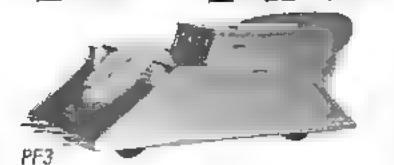


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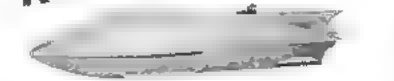


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pletely ignored at its conclusion, Siodmak's script didn't forget her; it provided her with dialogue and action all the way through to the story's end.

For students of this era, the rewards here are many. Tucked into this treasure trove of a book are an introduction by Siodmak (in which the veteran scripter tells in amusing detail the little "joke" he made in the studio commissary that gave producer George Waggner the idea to make the film), another superior and complete production background by Gregory Mank, and many extremely rare behind-the-scenes photos (including shots of the backlot village sets and a nicely-done photo montage recreating some of the deleted sequences involving Lugosi's dialogue). Pressbook and publicity reproductions are included, plus a bonus for movie music fans—a few pages from Hans J. Salter's original score. (Try playing it on the piano!)

Another well written and informative addition to a series whose quality is consistently high, *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* should have horror-film scholars awaiting future MagicImage books with bated breath.

—Richard Scrivani

**BROKEN MIRRORS/
BROKEN MINDS: THE DARK
DREAMS OF DARIO ARGENTO**

Maitland McDonagh
Sun Tavern Fields, London, 1991.
293 pages—\$30.00

Finally, there is available a complete critical analysis of the work of Italian-giallo maestro Dario Argento. In the capable hands of author Maitland McDonagh, this long-overdue survey of Argento's bizarre cinematic world is both thoroughly scholarly and enormously entertaining. Each of Argento's films is expertly analyzed, revealing a coherency to his films not superficially visible.

In the book's acknowledgments, McDonagh explains that the text is an expansion of her thesis for Columbia University. In an insightful introduction, she closely explores the genesis of the Italian-giallo film from its literary and cinematic heritage. What follows is a chronological investigation of each of Argento's films, from his start as a screenwriter of Sergio Leone's *ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST* (1969) through his early films *THE BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE* (1970) and *FOUR FLIES ON GREY VELVET* (1972), to his celebrated works *DEEP RED* (1976) and *SUSPIRIA* (1977) and his most recent creations, *OPERA* (1987) and *TWO EVIL EYES* (1990).

There are many interesting and little-known facets of Argento's career that are discussed as well: an obscure, early film (1973's *THE FIVE DAYS OF MILAN*), his work as a producer and collaborator with directors Lamberto Bava and Mi-

chele Soavi, and Argento's television contributions. (He has produced a horror/fantasy series of hour-long programs for Italian television and has even directed a fashion show and a Fiat car commercial.) Lastly, there is an interview with the director that is both enlightening and humorous.

McDonagh: Do you lie on the beach thinking of disgusting ways to kill people in your films?

Argento: Yes. I like when people are disgusted, because it means you've made an impression on them.

It must be noted that, although she mainly presents the text in a straightforward style, McDonagh is a serious and obviously well-informed film analyst. Some readers may become lost with her occasional university-style allusions and approaches. This is not a hindrance to the appreciation of her work. Such stringent analysis is necessary to support the validity of Argento's career as a director who is well aware of his artistic decisions.

Above all else, this enticingly-titled book (taken from a line from *SUSPIRIA*) is an absolute must for any Argentoophile. One comes away from it with a new sense of and respect for Dario Argento as an *auteur* who is both a dedicated craftsman and an inspiration for other filmmakers and filmgoers alike. This book is heartily recommended. Brava, Maitland!

—Michael Orlando Yaccarino

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DRACULA'S DAUGHTER

Credits

Released May 11, 1936. Director: Lambert Hillyer. Associate Producer: E. M. Asher. Screenplay: Garrett Fort. Suggested by Oliver Jeffries. Director of Photography: George Robinson. Art Director: Albert S. D'Agostino. Special Photography: John P. Fulton. Film Editor: Milton Carruth. Supervising Editor: Maurice Pivar. Music by Heinz Roemheld. Sound Supervisor: Gilbert Kurland. Makeup: Jack P. Pierce. Gowns: Brymer. Running time: 70 minutes.

Cast

Otto Kruger (Dr. Jeffrey Garth), Gloria Holden (Countess Marya Zaleska), Marguerite Churchill (Janet Blake), Edward Van Sloan (Dr. Von Helsing), Irving Pichel (Sandor), Nan Grey (Lili), Gilbert Emery (Sir Basil Humphrey), Hedda Hopper (Lady Esme Hammond), E. E. Chive (Sergeant Wilkes), Billy Bevan (Albert), Halliwell Hobbes (Constable Hawkins), Claude Allister (Sir Aubrey Bedford), Edgar Norton (Hobbs), Eily Malyon (Miss Peabody), George Kirby (Bookstore Owner).

structing her to present the reward to Peterson, the commissioner, played by Frank Middlemass (the actor who played Henry Baker in the Granada version).

It was a great pleasure to watch these programs. There was a sadness, too, for had they been filmed with a little more care, rather than videotaped quickly with filmed inserts, they would all be intact and available today, instead of locked up in some dusty vault. As it is, what remains of the series is fascinating. Amongst the programs I've discussed there's enough evidence to show quite clearly that Peter Cushing is one of the very best Sherlock Holmes we've had.



HOLMES AS DRACULA

Continued from page 23

JB: I see this woman from the window, pointed out by Mrs. Hudson, and I rush into the street. She leaps on board the carriage, but drops a book and I pick it up from the gutter. It's an account book and it's saturated, 'cause it's raining. So I dry it carefully in front of the fire with blotting paper between each leaf. And I say, "On these pages lies the life of this lady, drying like the wings of a butterfly. On this page—ah! You see, what beautiful writing. There's rage in this person. Look how the pen has pressed into the pages, torn on the letter 'P' here." Then I do some shavings from a lead pencil, and spread them on the corner of a page, and rub it and blow it, and say, "Ah! She reads! Bronte. Jane Austen. Sophocles." And with that there's a knock, and she stands in the door.

SS: *Bravo!*

JB: When I was told that I'd have to do it, it gave me the most enormous thrill, and the most enormous responsibility, of course! I don't know how many more we're going to make. I told Mobil that I'm prepared to finish the Canon and they have agreed to back me. And as long as my legs are beneath me, and I have lots of gaps between episodes, I'll do my best.

DRACULA'S DAUGHTER

Continued from page 59

en to Roemheld on DRACULA'S DAUGHTER is especially puzzling, as every note seems to be original and written solely for this film.

If the movie is marred, it's by the inane banter between Garth and Janet. It wouldn't have been out of place in a Howard Hawks screwball comedy, but it threatens to kill DRACULA'S DAUGHTER in its tracks. A short, comic scene or two is fine, but by the time we're watching Janet make "funny" phone calls to Garth, the mood of the film is seriously compromised. A less-damaging problem is the conspicuous absence of most of the characters from DRACULA. When Von Helsing's tale is first doubted, it would have been logical to call on the Harkers or Dr. Seward for corroboration. Thus a more satisfying story transition could have been made.

Nonetheless, DRACULA'S DAUGHTER is a sequel that works. It is the product of an era in Universal's history when horror melodramas were still being made with integrity, style, and more to the point—a sense of art. For the serious student of early fantasy and "cinemacabre," it merits rediscovery and reappraisal.



CUSHING TAPES

Continued from page 42

The Blue Carbuncle

This was the last program to be shown, and it went out (appropriately) three days before Christmas 1968. The story opens with "Lady" Morcar discovering the loss of her precious stone, the famous Blue Carbuncle, and calling on Holmes to instruct him in no uncertain terms that he must find it. (Apparently she has no faith in the official police.) Holmes rejects her entreaties: "Your case is that of a sneak thief, Lady Morcar. There is not a

single aspect which is of interest to me." The lady storms out, knocking Watson down in the process. The story then follows the plot of the original and is not unlike the Granada version in structure.

The famous episode in which Holmes examines the old felt hat and makes some amazing deductions about it and its owner is intriguing because of changes made by scriptwriter Stanley Miller. When Holmes, resplendent in a rich blue dressing gown, assures Watson that the hat was owned by someone "highly intellectual" because the hat is big and "a man with so large a brain must have something in it," his friend challenges this assumption. "Nonsense, Holmes," he says, "it's a medical fact that some people with large heads are congenital idiots." Similarly, Watson questions Holmes' assumption that Mrs. Henry Baker is the man's wife: "It could be his mother," he suggests, but Holmes dismisses this notion. However, when the owner of the hat turns up to claim it and the goose, he announces himself as "Mr. Harold Baker," explaining, "My late brother was Henry. I live with my sister-in-law and the goose is for her." Watson is greatly amused to discover that his old friend is not infallible after all.

The story ends with Holmes returning the gem to the bossy Lady Morcar, in-


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Continued from page 38

"Honest, I did, dear." And she said, "Well, honest, it didn't show."

RV: You appeared in some wonderful plays on television...

PC: Oh, yes! Terry Rattigan's *THE BROWNING VERSION* is a wonderful play! *THE WINSLOW BOY*, again by Rattigan. They were wonderful plays, wonderful plays. And, of course, they set me up as far as British audiences were concerned. During that time, that 10-year period, film people didn't want to have anything to do with actors connected with television, because television was keeping audiences out of the cinema. Except one company called Hammer...

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I try to be careful, Mr. Dodd, but being an actor's wife is not the easiest of jobs. If I tell him he's magnificent, he says I'm not being honest—if I tell him he's not magnificent, he says I don't love him.

GEORGE SEATON
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What did you think I was, anyway? A guy who walks into a good-looking dame's front parlor and says, "Good afternoon, I sell accident insurance on husbands. You've got one that's been around too long, one that you would like to turn into a little cash? Just give me a smile and I'll help you collect?"

BILLY WILDER AND RAYMOND CHANDLER
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Quotations compiled by Sally Jane Gellert

She smiled. It was as false as the teeth that made it possible.

JOSEPH HANSEN
The Boy Who Was Buried This Morning

[Horror films] are one of the modern myths, sort of Joseph Conrad on acid.

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Against Interpretation

Sherlock Holmes is a gentleman who never lived and will never die.

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A karate master does not kill people with his bare hands. He does not lose his temper and kill his wife. The person who kills is the person who has no discipline, no restraint, and who has purchased his power in the form of a Saturday night special.

MICHAEL CRICHTON
Jurassic Park

He went up to the nursery for the baby's supper tray, and we haven't seen him since.

WILLIS COOPER
Son of Frankenstein

No one would choose a friendless existence on condition of having all the other things in the world.

ARISTOTLE
Nicomachean Ethics

Murders are about love. . . . If you were a cynic you might even say they are the purest expression of it. Love—for a man or a woman, for money, revenge, religion, or even love of one's self. One way or another, all murders are crimes of passion.

S. T. HAYMON
Stately Homicide

The most I ever did for you was to outlive you.

But that is much.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY
untitled poem, *Make Bright the Arrows*

If Dracula does live here, he's gonna be wantin' breakfast and I'm fatter than you, and it ain't gonna be me!

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LOVE AMONG THE MILIONAIRES
MAN ON THE DIFFEL TOWER, THE
MANTRAP
MEETING AT MIDNIGHT
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MINE OWN EXECUTIONER
MONSTER, THE (SILENT)
MR. MOTO'S LAST WARNING
MY BEST GIRL (SILENT)

MY LADY OF WHIMS (SILENT)
MYSTERIOUS ISLAND, THE (SILENT)
NIGHT MY NUMBER CAME UP, THE
NO LIMIT
OLD DARK HOUSE, THE

PEACH O' KENO
POOR LITTLE RICH GIRL, THE (SILENT)
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THIRD MAN, THE

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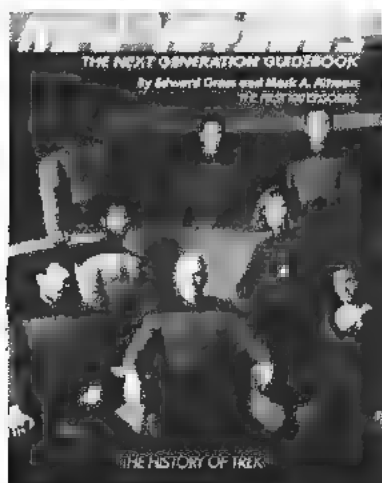
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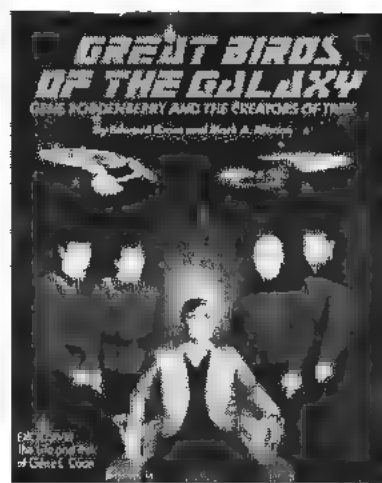
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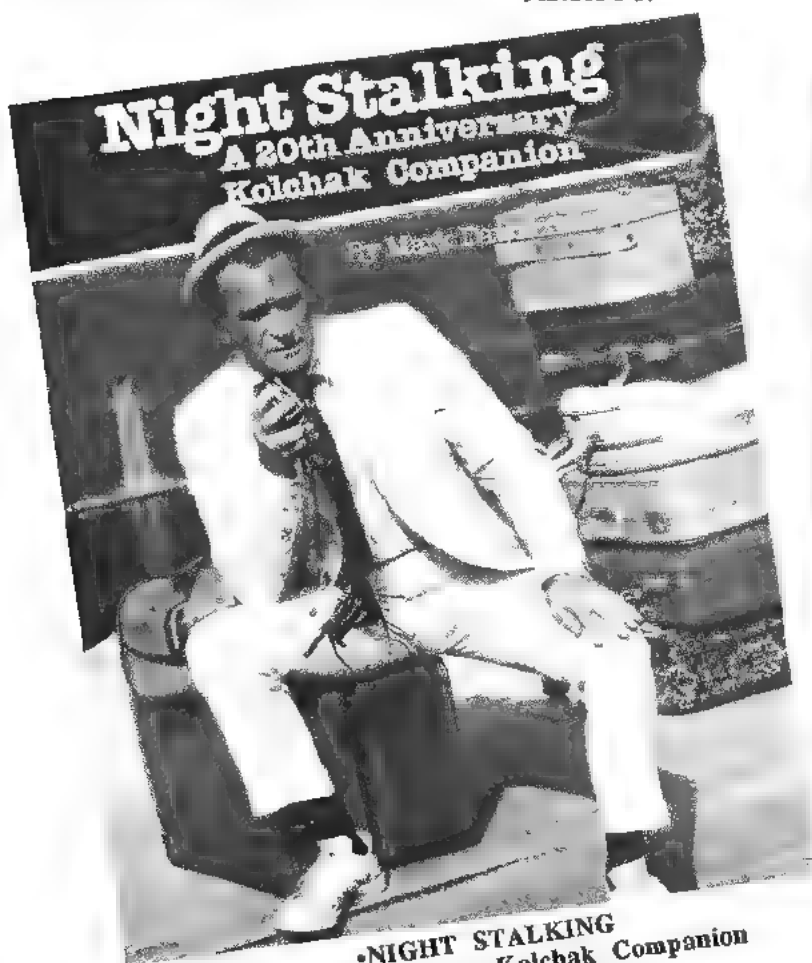
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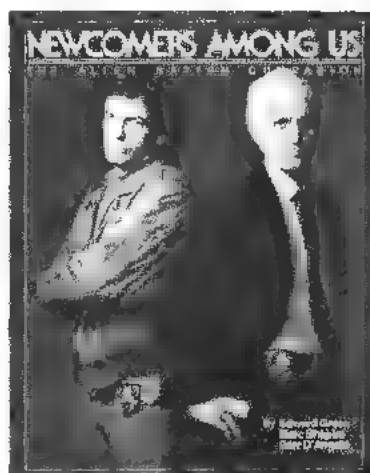


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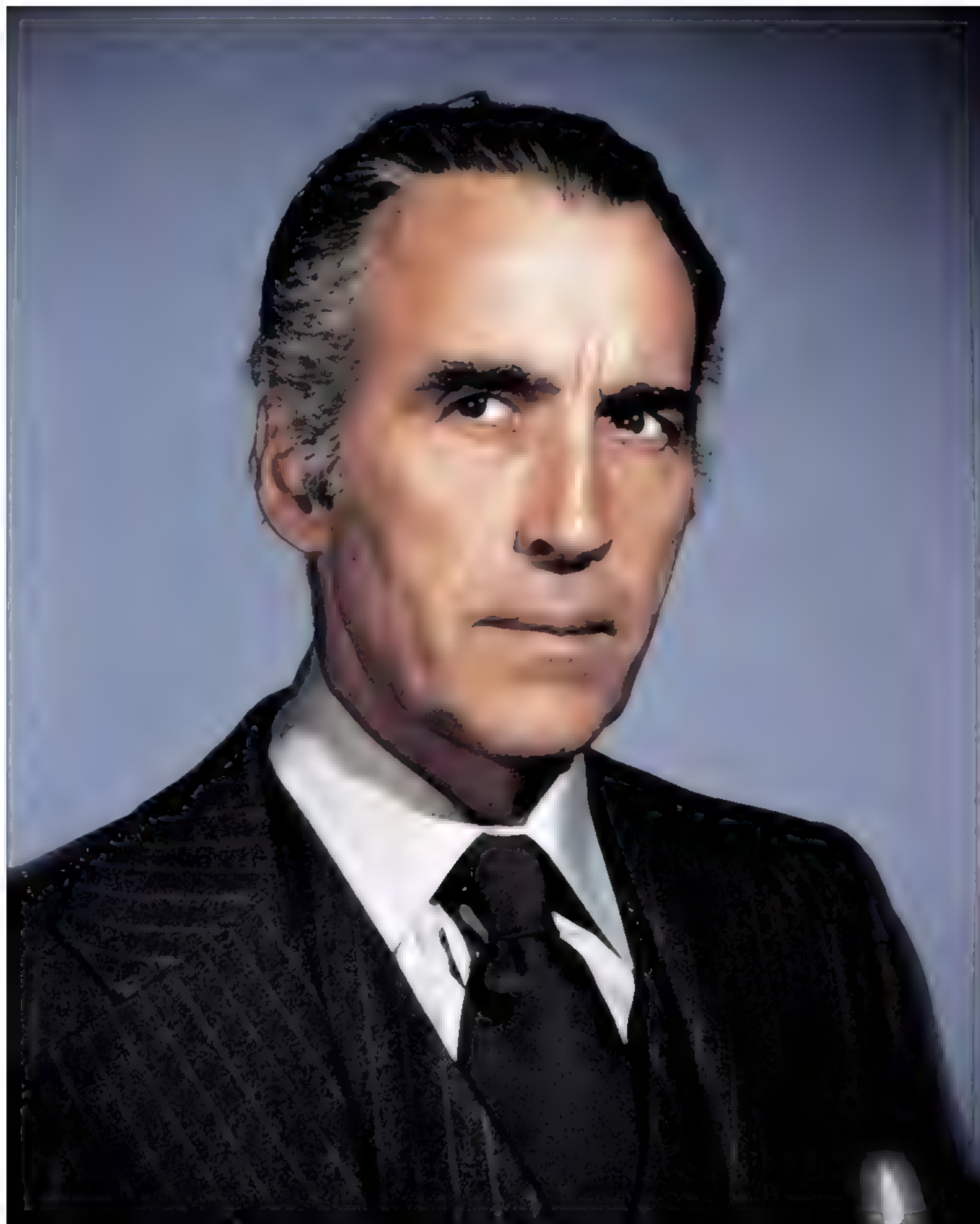
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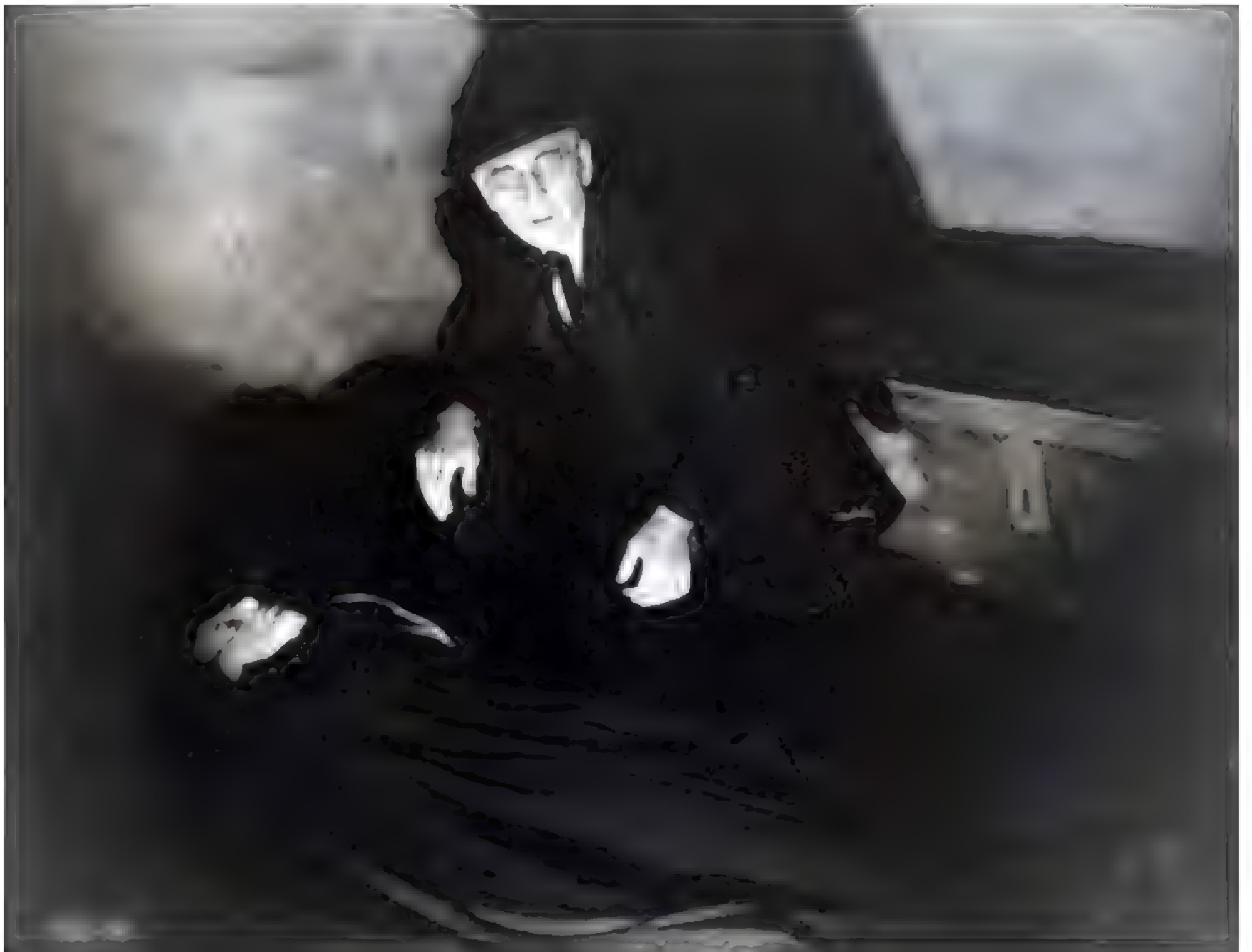
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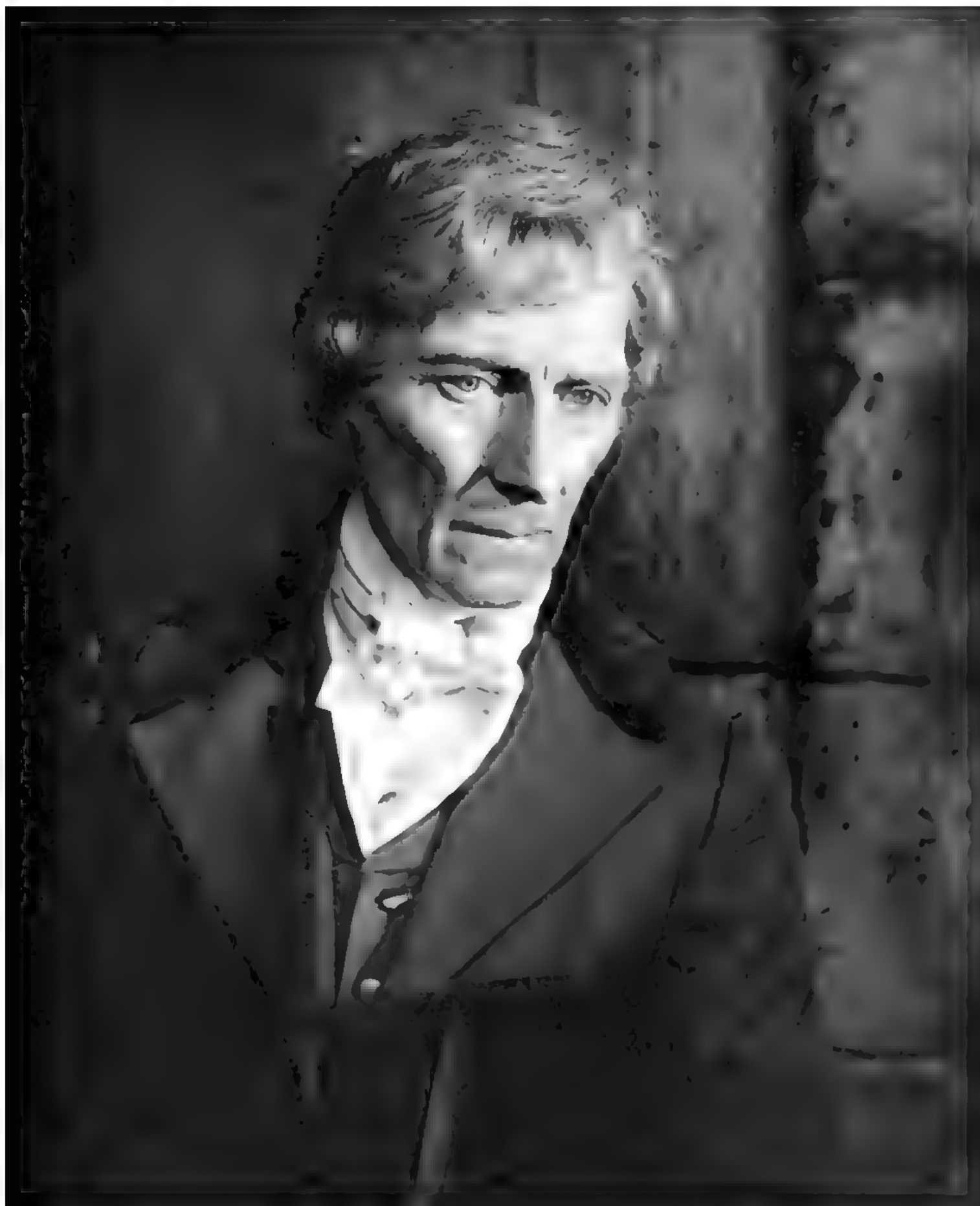
































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